



Wm. M. Darlington

DRAMATIC LIFE

AS I FOUND IT:

A RECORD OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCE; WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE RISE
AND PROGRESS OF THE DRAMA IN THE WEST AND SOUTH, WITH
ANECDOTES AND BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE PRIN-
CIPAL ACTORS AND ACTRESSES WHO HAVE AT
TIMES APPEARED UPON THE STAGE IN
THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY.

BY

N. M. LUDLOW,

ACTOR AND MANAGER FOR THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS.

*Speak of me as I am;
Nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice.*
— Shakespeare.

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DEDICATION.

TO THE MEMORY OF AN OLD FRIEND,

EDWIN FORREST,

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK.

“After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well.”

No one knew more thoroughly than Mr. Forrest the difficulties that had to be encountered by the pioneers of the Drama in the West.

No one on this continent has had a more wide-spread reputation as a great actor.

No one on this side of the Atlantic has achieved a more honorable place in the temple of the Histrionic Art.

No one knew the generous nature of this great tragedian better than the writer of these lines.

N. M. LUDLOW.

PREFACE.

IN undertaking and performing the work of writing this book, I have been urged by three leading motives, which will, I think, excuse me in the minds of my readers for obtruding myself upon their notice.

First: The early history of so important a portion of the literature of our country as the Drama should not be lost in the obscurity of by-gone years, especially that portion of it which has made such unprecedented advancement toward perfection as may be found at the present day in the great Valley of the Mississippi. As this history should be written, and no one has hitherto published such a record, the writer of these lines has undertaken the task, and will leave behind him a true account of the early Drama of the West and South. This history, founded on a personal knowledge of, and intimate connection with, the subject-matter for sixty-five years, the writer hopes some reliable author may take up and carry forward to a successor; and that in this way, in the course of time, there may be obtained an entire and complete history of the Drama of the United States of North America.

A second reason, and one prompting the writer to the work, was the desire to fulfil a promise made, through a mutual friend, to William Dunlap, Esq., — author of the “History of the American Theatre,” published in 1832, — that should he continue any considerable length of time among the theatres of the West and South, he would leave behind him some account of them.

Third: This book has been written that I may make a statement of *facts* in a representation made of me by my partner of eighteen years, a short time previous to his death, in a book published by him, wherein he charges me with duplicity in a transaction that took place a year before he and I became partners in theatrical management.

Before closing these remarks, I desire to return my thanks to those ladies and gentlemen who so kindly aided in procuring subscriptions to my book; also to the public in general, who have

so promptly aided my desire to produce it, by their liberal subscriptions.

This work, I hope and trust, may become a foundation on which some historian of the future may construct the coming history of the Drama of the South and West of our continent.

To Mr. Joseph N. Ireland, and his extensive and reliable work entitled "The New York Stage," I am indebted for considerable information in regard to the early history of the English actors and actresses who, in time, became favorites with the people of the Mississippi Valley.

And now, though last, not least, am I indebted to my dear daughter, for her aid and advice in the revision and reconstruction of my book after my eyesight became so much impaired that I could not by any means available read my own manuscript.

With these remarks, I commit to the generosity of the public this my first effort in book-writing, "with all its faults upon its head."

N. M. LUDLOW.

ST. LOUIS, June 1, 1880.

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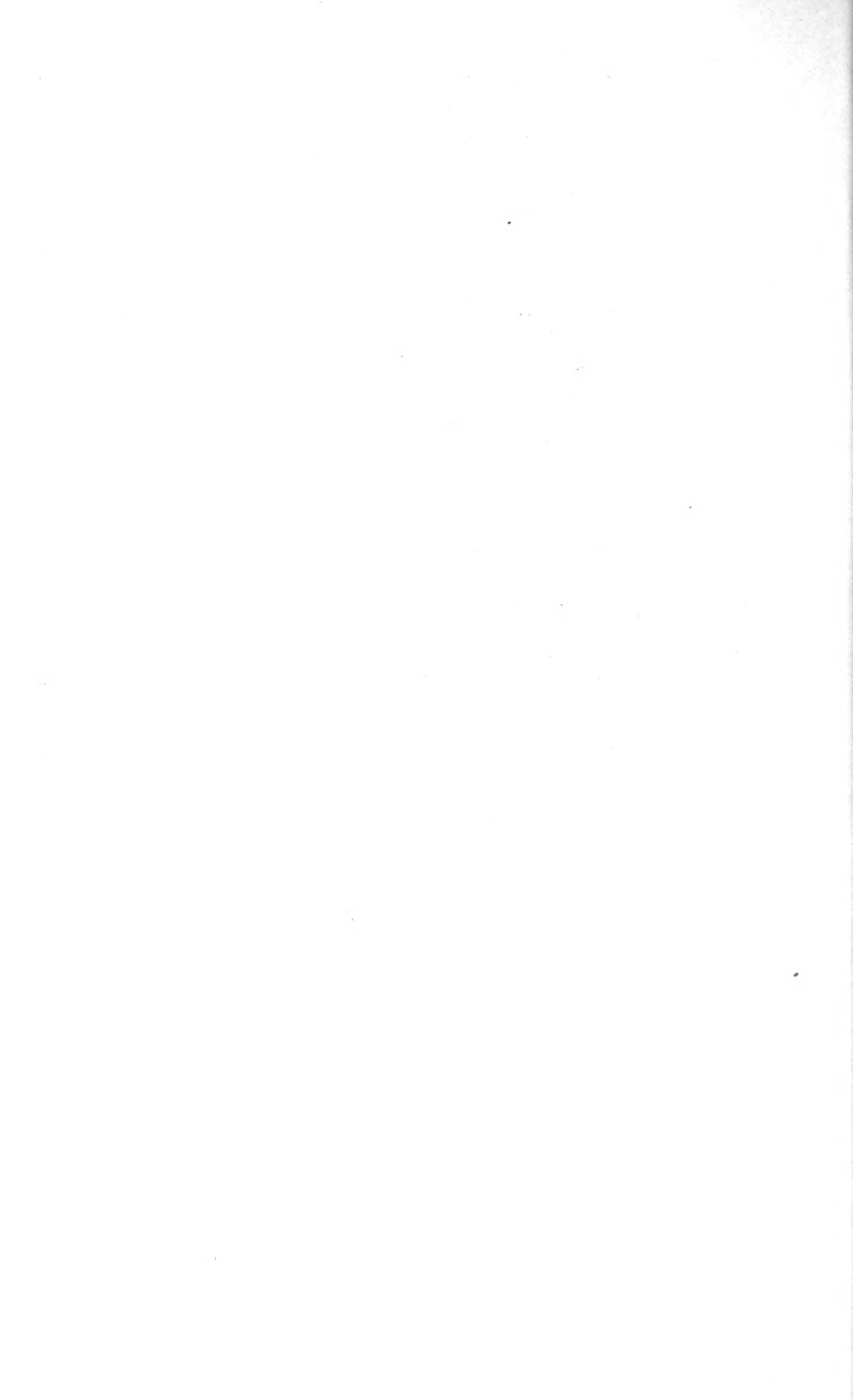
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DRAMATIC LIFE AS I FOUND IT.

“All the world’s a stage,
And all the men and women merely players.”
—[SHAKESPEARE.]

CHAPTER I.

Preliminary — “First Appearance” — First Performance — 1813 — Joins Mr. Drake’s Company, the first regular Company travelling in the West — Leaving Home — Stage Accoutrements — Route West through New York — Incidents of Primitive Travelling.

VERY little is known in the great cities of the East and North of our country as to the present condition of the Drama in the Valley of the Mississippi, and still less is known of the rise and progress of the same to its present condition. Therefore, I think I may say that the vast dramatic field of the present day, lying in the great valley bounded by the Allegheny and the Rocky Mountains, is, to the larger portion of the inhabitants of our country, east and west, almost a *terra incognita*.

Several persons have written on the subject of the Drama of the United States, but their records have been principally — I may, perhaps, say entirely — confined to those States that are bordered by the Atlantic Ocean. At long extended intervals of time there have been limited sketches published in newspapers and magazines, but they have been frequently interspersed with errors and inaccuracies. What I shall relate in these pages will be the result of my own actual experience and knowledge, and not hearsay or second-hand invention.

Having been an actor thirty-eight years, and a manager of theatres thirty-four years of the time, I feel as though I might be permitted to speak in this connection, as it were, *ex cathedra*.

I am, I believe, the oldest living actor and manager in the United States, having commenced my career in the spring

of 1815; and, although I professionally withdrew from histrionic duties in 1853, I have been socially and intimately connected with the stage up to the present day, especially that portion of which I am now about to write. I mean the **DRAMA OF THE WEST**.

For the greater part of my life I have entertained the opinion that the pioneers on the various roads of the world's broad highways were among the most interesting objects for the study of the coming generations of men. Like milestones, that serve to mark the progress of the traveller, so the pioneers of the Drama serve to mark the progress of civilization and refinement. Their efforts are with the minds and hearts of men, striving to counterbalance the physical with the more humanizing mental qualities of their natures. This effect can be profitably shown in the history of the Drama, from its earliest introduction to the world even to the present day. But my object is not to enter into details and arguments on this point here, therefore I shall proceed at once to record my own adventures and those of my *confreres*, the pioneers (as we claim, and will endeavor to prove) of the Drama of the West.

What I am about to write may, perhaps, with propriety be styled scattered leaves from my tree of life, now about to be gathered up and placed before the world in a connected form for its inspection, and, I trust, its merciful criticism.

When we are about to start on a journey with a person comparatively a stranger to us, we very naturally desire to know something of the antecedents of our *compagnon de voyage*.

In an old Dutch-fashioned house, built of bricks imported from Holland, the front of which was the gable-end, with an old iron weathercock crowning the peak of the gable, the same standing on Whitehall Street, in the city of New York, was the writer of these lines born. The precise day, or rather hour of the night, was a point of dispute with my respected parents,—my father contending it was on the fourth of July, 1795; my mother averring it was on the *third*, near midnight. My father, notwithstanding his patriotic procivities, had finally to yield so far as to allow it to be recorded in the family Bible as occurring on the third of July, ten minutes before midnight. But, true to this predetermined opinion, he often declared that the Fourth of July gun had been fired upon the "Battery" ere I shouted for help.

In regard to my position in life, when grown to manhood, it was my mother's wish that I should be a merchant; she

having a brother, a very wealthy man, who stood at the head of that honorable and influential class, and whom she expected one day to take me under his auspices. In carrying out these views, I was at an early age placed in a mercantile house, where I remained until I was eighteen years of age. When the war with Great Britain commenced, in 1812, I felt a burning desire to fight the battles of my country, so during a long visit of mother into New Jersey, with my father's consent and the help of an influential friend in Washington City, I had very nearly succeeded in obtaining a midshipman's position in our navy when my mother returned home, and by tears and entreaties prevailed upon my father to have what had been done, undone; and thus was I thwarted in my desires, and the country deprived of a hero (perhaps) that would have gladly fought, bled, and died, and been handed down to posterity (maybe) with other great ones of that day.

My mother was a very religious woman, of the strictest sect, and my father a man who found no particular pleasure in the so-called amusements of the day; therefore my very early youth had been kept free from such "delusions" as theatres. The first performance that I beheld in a theatre was when I had arrived at the age of twelve or thirteen years; it was the *pantomime* of "Cinderella," then produced with much care and splendor, and for the first time, on the stage of the old Park Theatre, standing at the junction of Broadway and Chatham Street, New York. The second performance I beheld was the comedy of "John Bull," some time in the fall of 1810. I had gone to the theatre expecting to see that great actor, George Frederick Cooke, but was disappointed, Mr. Cooke being "unwell," as was stated at the time, and the above comedy was substituted for Shakespeare's King Henry IV. I was richly compensated for any supposed loss. When I went home I could repeat much of the very language of the play, and the first scene between *Dennis Brulgrudderry*, the Irishman, and *Dan*, the Cornish man, — I could repeat almost *verbatim*.

Perhaps it may please some of the old play-goers of those days — if any such be alive to read this — for me to recall some of the principal actors on that night: *Job Thornberry*, was acted by Mr. Hogg; *Dennis Brulgrudderry*, by Mr. McFarland; *Dan*, Mrs. Hilson; *Tom Shuffleton*, Mr. Darley; *Peregrine*, Mr. Doyle; *Lady Caroline*, Mrs. Oldmixon; *Mary Thornberry*, Mrs. Darley; *Mrs. Brulgrudderry*, Mrs. Hogg. It was very well played, although produced in an emergency.

During the summer of 1813, my father died suddenly, while on a visit to my brother John, then residing at Schenectady, New York. That calamity, and the earnest solicitations of my mother, then residing with my brother Joseph, at Albany, caused me to resign my business situation and join her in that city. From a combination of circumstances not necessary to mention here, I remained in Albany until early in the spring of 1814, during which time I became acquainted with three or four actors of the only theatre there, then under the management of Mr. John Bernard, an excellent comedian of the old school. This gentleman's acting was the foundation and model of Henry Placide's early efforts in the Drama, and on which he built up a name for chaste and legitimate acting that has been rarely equalled on our American stage. I know of but one gentleman, now a performer in a principal theatre in the city of New York, whose perfected and artistic style of acting can bear a comparison with that of the late Henry Placide's; of this gentleman I shall have occasion to say more hereafter.

During the fall of 1813, having become acquainted with the actors, and through them obtained the privilege of entering behind the curtain, a passion for histrionic fame, which had possessed me for years, now began to gather hope of future gratification. On two occasions I was permitted, *sub rosa*, and without any name in the bills of the day, to speak each time a few lines. On the first occasion it was really only two words — "Dread master!" — representing at the time one of Orcobrand's fiends, in the melo-dramatic spectacle of the "Forty Thieves." I was so much overcome with stage fright that I did not know whether I had uttered a word, but was told by Henry Placide, then a lad of about fifteen years of age, and who played another one of those fiends, that I had spoken out boldly. This encouraged me to try once more, and some matter of a greater number of words; and this occasion came up in the representation of the comedy, "Speed the Plough," in which I obtained some lines set down for a smart servant of Robert Handy. These I uttered with a spirit and boldness that obtained for me some applause, which elated me much at the moment; but I afterwards found that this had been started by my young friend Placide, Moore, and Alex. Drake. My ambition on that night was fanned into a flame, when Mr. Thomas Burke, who was the *Sir Abel Handy* of the night, said to me: "Young man, I am told that this is the first time you have spoken on the stage; allow me to say that if you persevere you will some day become an actor of note." In 1821, in the city of New Orleans, I acted *Bob Handy* to his

Sir Abel, when I reminded him of his remarks to me in Albany, in 1814.

In the fall of 1814, a gentleman of the name of Noble Luke Usher presented himself at the Albany theatre, stating that he was an "actor, and had recently arrived from the State of Kentucky." That State was then considered the "far, far West." He wished to play an engagement of a few nights, and proposed to commence with "Macbeth." Mr. Usher had been known in Philadelphia, New York, and Boston, where he had acted a few years previous; and Mr. Bernard having seen him perform in one of those cities, engaged him for a limited number of nights. During those nights Mr. Usher disclosed to Mr. Samuel Drake, Sr., then stage-manager for Mr. Bernard, his principal object in coming from Kentucky to the Eastern States. It was to endeavor to engage a company of comedians to visit Kentucky, where he said he had three theatres, — one at Lexington, one at Frankfort, and a third at Louisville. After numerous conversations between them, Mr. Drake agreed to form a small company of actors with whom he would start for Kentucky the following spring, and on reaching there to enter upon the duties of stage-manager in the employ of Mr. Usher. On his way back to Kentucky Mr. Usher died, at a house on the ridge of the Allegheny Mountains, and his body, after burial, was disinterred and conveyed to Lexington, as directed by his uncle, Mr. Luke Usher, for many years a resident of that city. After the death of his nephew, Mr. Luke Usher opened a correspondence with Mr. Drake, which resulted in the latter becoming a lessee of the Lexington, Frankfort, and Louisville theaters, and manager there on his own account.

With the commencement of the year 1815, Mr. Drake was looking around for some actors and actresses bold and adventurous enough to risk their lives and fortunes in a Western wilderness, as Kentucky was then popularly supposed to be. Experienced stage-performers, holding comfortable situations in the Eastern theaters, were unwilling to venture on this wild scheme, and Mr. Drake was somewhat puzzled to find the persons required to make up his company. In this dilemma he had resource to two novices, — one a young lady, a resident of Albany, the other the writer of these memoirs. He told me very candidly that he was going on a voyage of adventure, which possibly might result disastrously; but added, should it prove otherwise, he would advance my fortunes as his good luck and my merits might justify. I was too glad of an opportunity to embark in what had become now my entire am-

bition, to hesitate an hour in giving him an answer. He desired me to consider the matter seriously before giving him a positive answer, and allowed me a week to think of it; but I told him I would give an answer in twenty-four hours, and I did. It was that "he might depend on me as one of the members of his company, destined for the far West." The only unpleasant reflections that followed this determination were those of parting with my mother, and a sister, younger than myself, both residing then with my brother Joseph, in Albany; but I had pledged my word to Mr. Drake, and it was an early established rule of my life never to swerve from a pledge given in any matter of importance.

As Mr. Drake did not wish to reach Kentucky until late in the fall, he had decided to prolong his journey by performing at certain towns on his way to this "land of promise;" this would, in all probability, defray a portion of the expenses and give him an opportunity to drill his raw recruits. His course was to travel north-west in the State of New York, until he should reach Canandaigua; then to deflect to the south-west, strike the head waters of the Alleghany river, descend by boat to Pittsburg, and perform there until the assembling of the State Legislature of Kentucky, early in December.

As Mr. Drake intended to start on this expedition immediately on the close of the theatrical season in Albany, and as I was the only *man* of the small company of adventurers not engaged in the theatre there, it was agreed that I should precede the party by a few days, and get a place ready for our performance, that no time should be lost in preparation after the arrival of the company. This office I undertook to fill.

When the time arrived for my departure, I sent my baggage on the previous night to the stage office from where I was to start, and on a clear and bright morning in May, 1815, about sunrise, without saying good-by to any of my family; and with a heavy heart at parting from the only two beings around whom my heart-strings were then entwined, — my dear, good mother, and loving sister, — I quietly walked from my bedroom; and as I passed that of my mother, the door standing ajar, I beheld her on her knees in prayer, and heard her utter these words: "Oh! Father! be with him in his journey through life, and keep his soul from sin." My heart nearly failed me; but the fiend stood at my elbow and pushed me on. I rushed out of the house, and saw her no more for ten years. This was the first regretful act of my life. Reflection soon brought to my mind the anguish of that mother who almost doted on the son that had left her without a parting

word, and the thought haunted me like a ghost, and has done so ever since. I was the youngest son, and I believe the favorite one of my mother, inasmuch as I was the only one who at an early age appeared to sympathize in her religious sentiments. I used to write hymns and religious pieces in verse when I was only ten years of age, and she, good woman, predicted that some day I would become a great *preacher*; to what extent she was a prophet, the sequel of these relations will determine.

For more than a month none of my family knew where I had gone, or with whom I had united myself; then a young friend, by my instructions, informed my brother Joseph of my destination and my associations. I was told that my mother's grief was very great, my sister drooped and became melancholy, my brother Joseph said but little, and seemed unwilling to talk about me. Of my brother John, who lived in Schenectady, I could only learn that he had said I had made a "genteel vagabond of myself, and that he was done with me forever!" My brother David, being absent, knew nothing of my wanderings for a long time, and I never knew his feelings in regard to this course of mine until more than five years after, when I accidentally encountered him in a street of New Orleans; and then we were both too happy at meeting each other to think of any thing but our boyhood days and our old home in New York.

About sundown of the day of my departure from Albany, the stage-coach set me down at a hotel door in the small town of Cherry Valley, about forty or fifty miles west of Albany. Early the next day I commenced to seek for a suitable place for our performances, and, with the assistance of the hotel proprietor, had but little trouble in obtaining, through the kindness of the sheriff, the use of the court-house for the purpose. With the aid of a carpenter we very soon had a platform raised, about three feet in height, directly in front of the judge's desk. The sheriff and the landlord helped me in procuring extra seating accommodations; and at the close of the second day after my arrival, I had the place ready for the scenery to be put up, which was to come on with Mr. Drake and the company. The stage adjuncts consisted of but six scenes, a wood, street, parlor, kitchen, palace, and garden. The wings, or side-scenes, consisted of three of a side, to be stationary in one sense, but to be so arranged with flaps or aprons as to present, when required, an out-door view adapted to correspond with garden or street; an in-door view, to suit parlor or palace; with a third, to match the kitchen. The proscenium

was a painted drapery, made so as to be expanded or contracted to suit the dimensions of the places occupied by our performances. These and a neat drop-curtain, and green baize carpet, constituted our stage facilities. The scenery could be put in place, or taken down and packed, in two or three hours. At the close of the third day our party arrived. When the stage-coach reached the hotel, I was seated on the front porch, and stepped forward to assist the ladies from the carriage. The first one to alight was the other novice engaged by Mr. Drake, Miss Fanny Denny. As I presented my hand to help her out, she halted, gazed at me for a second, and I at her; then both broke out into uncontrollable laughter. The by-standers for a few seconds were somewhat amazed, and Mr. Drake, Sr., said: "I thought you were unacquainted with each other;" and the laugh began again. "Ah, ha!" said one; "Oh, ho!" said another; "Gretna Green" said a third; "Neatly managed" exclaimed a fourth, while Miss Fanny and myself kept up a a running accompaniment of laughter. But they were all on the wrong scent. The mystery was this: Miss Denny and myself had met before on several occasions at the house of her married sister in Albany, and some small specimens of flirting had taken place between us. My absence for more than a year, and her having better things to think of, had cooled the matter down; and as we had not met for months, neither knew of the other's proclivities for the stage, hence our astonishment and laughter at meeting on such an occasion. Certain members of the company predicted a marriage between us, but no such event ever happened. Some years after, this young lady became the wife of Alexander Drake, one of the party then present, and in due time the mother of a lady well known in the profession, Mrs. Harry Chapman, and consequently grandmother of the "Chapman Sisters," all well known in theatrical circles, especially in the West.

Mr. Drake's company at this time was very small, and the larger portion, members of his own family; but he expected some six or eight persons to join him at Pittsburg and Frankfort. The then members were Samuel Drake, Sr., Samuel Drake, Jr., Alexander Drake, James Drake, N. M. Ludlow, Mrs. Lewis, Miss Denny, Miss Martha Drake, Miss Julia Drake, Mr. Lewis, stage-carpenter, and Joe Tracy, man-of-all-work.

Our first night's performance consisted of two farces. The first was "The Prize, or 2, 5, 3, 8." I was not employed in this. The second piece was "The Purse, or the Benevolent Tar," in which I enacted a young tragedy-villain, *Theo-*

dore. In this I intended to astonish the natives generally, and the manager in particular. The character had several passages filled with notes of admiration and exclamation, "Ah! 's" and "Ha! 's," and climaxes of villainous rage. I had imbued myself with the spirit of the part so that my very hair stood on end with bloody thoughts. When the time came for me to let loose the volcano of ferocity (to make use of a modern expressive phrase), "I made Rome howl!" As I rushed off the stage, accompanied with a round of applause from the "groundlings," the manager happened to pass near me, and very triumphantly I said, "How was that, sir?" To which he replied, "O, d—d bad!" and passed very quickly. "Malice," thought I. "Sheer spite and envy, by the gods! He has two sons, and is afraid I'll eclipse them. But wait till we reach Kentucky; the people there, appreciating my talents, will compel the manager to respect their opinions." The other novice, Miss Denny, did not appear until the second night, and then in the character of *Julia*, in the petit comedy of the "Midnight Hour." Her first attempt was better than mine; she was more quiet and modest. In this comedy I performed *Sebastian*, a smart servant, and got along much better, for I did not attempt to do so much; in fact, after the "success" that I felt I had achieved in the character of *Theodore*, notwithstanding the manager's wish to "crush" me, I rather looked with contempt upon that of *Sebastian*. Mrs. Lewis, a kind-hearted lady, and an excellent actress, said: "Young man, you got through that part very well; stick to comedy, and you'll be a good actor one of these days; you *ranted* too much in *Theodore*." Time proved, I think, that she was right in regard to my capabilities lying more in comedy than tragedy.

Our next point of stopping was Cooperstown, the residence of our great American novelist, J. Fenimore Cooper; and I understood that he did us the honor to attend our performances, and encourage our pioneer efforts in the cause of the Drama.

Nothing occurred here of any particular note, except the extraordinary instance of an actor attempting to play a speaking part, and getting through it without uttering five words consecutively of any one speech. This person was myself, and the piece the farce of "The Prize." The character of *Captain Heartwell*, in this farce, had been represented by Samuel Drake, Jr.; he was taken ill about mid-day before the night of performance. I was the only man on whom the manager could call to undertake the part. It was a severe task for a

novice, but I undertook it, and got tolerably perfect in the words; but as soon as I came upon the stage the words all were frightened out of my head. My first scene was with *Doctor Lenitive* (Drake, Sr). I made an attempt to speak — stuck; couldn't get on. Mr. Drake, seeing my situation, — that I was, in stage parlance, “stuck dead,” — said: “Pray, Captain, don't speak; I know you are too unwell to exert yourself, that is why I am called in; I understand what you would say;” and then he would repeat enough of my speech to enable himself to reply to it. In this way we got through the scene, and in fact the whole farce. The persons with whom my scenes were, — Drake, Sr., Alexander Drake, and Mrs. Lewis, — being experienced stagers, and well acquainted with the farce, spoke my words and their own also. I really believe I did not finish one sentence that I began throughout the whole farce; and the audience — dear, good, unsophisticated mortals — never knew but that it was all so intended.

In this town, as in the preceding one, we gave six nights of performance, and the same number in each one visited by us. I do not remember exactly the order in which we took these towns, but I distinctly recollect that we visited, after leaving Cooperstown, Skeneateles, Herkimer, Onondago Hollow, Manlius, Utica, Auburn, Geneva, and Canandaigua; in all these towns I believe we were the *first* to introduce the regular Drama. I came to this conclusion from the eagerness with which they sought our performances, and the simplicity and good nature with which they applauded our crude attempts in a dramatic way.

Our next town, I think, was Skeneateles, where we performed in the ball-room of the hotel at which we were stopping. In order to baffle the pursuit or interference of my brothers, I had assumed the name of Brown in the play-bills, but the company generally addressed me by my real name of Ludlow. This, in a few instances, produced annoyances; one of these arose in this town of Skeneateles, so that I began to perceive that this might create a suspicion that all was not right with me. As evidence of this, the landlord of the hotel where we were stopping, one day commenced questioning me in regard to my comrades calling me by a different name than the one I was registered under on his books, and under which I acted, as set forth in the play-bills. As I perceived the drift of his thoughts, I determined to satisfy his curiosity, and so told him my reason for changing my name was, that I had joined the actors very much against the wishes of my relatives, and that I hoped by this course to avoid their interference or an-

noyance. This seemed to satisfy him in part, but he gave me a piece of wholesome advice, which I here record for the benefit of all those who, like myself, may chance to begin the world with mistaken notions of its requirements. His words were: "Young man, you appear to be a gentleman; let me give you a small portion of advice. I have seen more of the world than you have. Never embark in any thing you are afraid to have known, or ashamed to have your name associated with. If it be an honest calling, an honest man cannot be disgraced by it. Remember what Pope, the poet, says: —

" 'Honor and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part — there all the honor lies.' "

I thought the man was right. I thanked him, and ever after was known by no other name than the one given me by my parents.

I shall forego, in this relation, the mention of any circumstances attending our visits to the towns that intervened between Skeneateles and Canandaigua, as there was little matter of interest connected with them, and the plays and farces performed were about the same in each of them. I will, however, say this much for them: our performances were generally well received by them, and liberally remunerated, considering the limited population in each town at that time.

At Canandaigua we were permitted to occupy the courthouse, and this was generously donated to us. Here the manager produced for the first time, by us, the well-known and popular tragedy of "*Adelgitha, or the Fruits of a Single Error*," the principal characters of which were cast as follows: *Adelgitha*, Mrs. Lewis; *Imma*, Miss Denny; *Claudia*, Miss Martha Drake; *Michael Ducas*, Mr. Drake, Sr.; *Guiscard*, Mr. S. Drake, Jr.; *Lothair*, Mr. Ludlow; *Dercitus*, Mr. A. Drake; *Alciphron*, Master J. Drake. Here was an opportunity for an aspiring young man, ready to immortalize himself under the banner of Melpomene; and he embraced it with ardor. Only think of it! the youthful, dashing hero, *Lothair*! What an opportunity, thought I. And began to seriously reproach myself for my suspicions of the manager's intentions of attempting to bar the door against my future and imperishable fame! I determined that this opportunity should not be lost. I had seen the character acted tolerably well in Albany, prior to my leaving there; had become better perfected in the words; the manager had allotted me a very handsome suit of armor, and I was prepared to astonish the Canandaiguans — and I *did*. I was applauded to my heart's content by the audience,

and complimented by members of the company. Here was the result of determination and application. Let all young aspirants for histrionic fame "make a note of it." Miss Denny was equally successful in the character of *Imma*. And here let me say, by way of parenthesis, that in after years this lady performed the character of *Adelgitha* better, in my opinion, than any other one I ever saw.

While we performed in Canandaigua, an incident occurred rather amusing in its nature; but it has been told before by a theatrical man, who published a book of anecdotes, wherein he claimed this as one actually occurring connected with himself, and years after the period of which I am about to write. He had heard me relate it, and placing more importance on it than I had, did me the honor to adopt it. He tells it well, but "with a difference," and I can only say, with *Sir Benjamin Backbite*, that "my uncle's story may be more circumstantial, but mine is the true one." I have said that we performed in this town in the court-house, and, as before stated, it was our custom to eke out the proscenium of the stage by suspended draperies extending to the side walls. I mention this, that what will be herein told may be the better understood. On the evening that we performed the petit comedy called the "Midnight Hour," two men, auditors on the occasion, and who evidently had never seen a dramatic performance before, were seated on one side, near the stage. As the performance proceeded, they would make remarks loud enough to be heard behind the scenes; and in one instance I was an attentive listener to these remarks. In the course of the comedy a large chest is brought on the stage, supposed to be filled with silks and satins, wedding-presents for the young lady *Julia* from a rich *old* lover, but which really contained a *young* lover that the lady preferred. An inquisitive chambermaid having obtained the key, with a curiosity said to be natural to her sex, resolved to have a peep at the fine things before her mistress got possession of them; so opens the chest, when up pops the head of the young lover; of course the girl screams, and the lover tries to stop her mouth. In a silent moment that followed the screaming, one of these men auditors said to the other, in a tone loud enough to be heard through the house: "I tell you, Bill, I'll be blowed if them's *wax figures*; for the one that came out of the chest *had no string at his back!*" They had evidently, at one time, supposed this to be a kind of Punch and Judy exhibition on a large scale.

Sometime about the latter part of July, 1815, our party started from Canandaigua for the head waters of the Allegheny

River. Our means of transportation were a road-wagon, drawn by two horses, owned by Mr. Drake, and a light spring-wagon owned by Mr. Lewis, drawn by one horse, and used for the convenience and comfort of his wife, and occasionally one other of the ladies; the other portions of the company, after leaving town, were expected to walk the greater part of the way. The manager, being the oldest person, and rather obese, it was unanimously decided, should occupy a seat in the large wagon by the side of the driver, Joe Tracy. Sam Drake, Alexander, his brother (familiarily, "Aleck"), and I, started on foot before sunrise; for Sam said, "I'll not march through Coventry with them, that's flat!" and so we started on ahead, the cavalcade following about sunrise; and in this way we started for Olean, a settlement on the Allegheny River, Cataraugus County, New York, about one hundred and fifty miles south-west of Canandaigua, and through what was then almost a wilderness. On the third day of our pedestrian journey a most exciting incident occurred, that threw a damper over the spirits of the whole party. In the afternoon, about four o'clock, Mrs. Lewis, who had become restless, by being cramped up in a long-continued position in their small wagon, got out to walk awhile; and being somewhat troubled with flesh, and not very active, lagged behind the wagons at a little distance, but generally was in view; for when there was a short turn in the road, Mr. Lewis would stop till she overtook him. On an occasion of this kind he paused until all had passed on ahead, and still waited, momentarily expecting the arrival of his wife. He waited, until impatience became fear, when he suddenly turned and drove back, thinking for a moment that she might have sprained an ankle, or met with some other accident that prevented her from coming on. He drove hurriedly back until he recognized the spot where she got out of the wagon; but no wife was to be seen. Half frightened out of his wits, he turned and drove wildly after the party, then considerably far ahead of him, and calling his wife's name at the top of his voice, in the most frantic way, until he came up with us. The consternation that his words caused in us all may well be imagined. The lady was a great favorite with the company; her pleasant ways and amiable disposition made her beloved by all, young and old. What was to be done? We were in a wilderness, miles away from any habitation that we knew of then. However, we soon determined to go back in search of her. We drove the wagons to one side of the road, took the horses out, and prepared to scatter our company in all directions towards the

way we had come. As we were just upon the point of separating for that purpose, two men came along on horseback from the way we had travelled; but they had not seen a woman. Something prompted Mr. Lewis to take one of these men aside, where for a few minutes they conversed together, in an earnest and most mysterious manner. There were some strange motions made by them both—at least strange to my young ideas, then. When they came back to our party, one of the strangers told his friend that he “*must* help these people.” Then the two stepped aside and had a private conversation. When they joined our party, I saw there was a determination in their looks that meant something more than ordinary. One of them said to Lewis: “Scatter your men throughout the woods, and shout as loud as you can. I live about three miles ahead on this road; by the time the sun sets, I’ll join your party with such forces as I can raise; and we’ll not stop our search until we’ve found your wife.” I could not help an impulse in my heart to exclaim: “God bless your brown, weather-beaten face! You’re an angel of goodness in a homespun suit.” I felt, I suppose, as St. John felt in the Island of Patmos, when the angel of the Lord appeared to him; I wanted to fall down and worship him, and would have done so, but that I knew he was “my fellow-servant.” As soon as these two men had left us, we started to carry out the instructions we had received from them. As the shades of night were creeping around us, we began to think of our new friends, and to wish they were with us. Instinctively we began to close up together, so that we could occasionally hear each other’s voices, and began to apprehend that we might become lost ourselves. It was not long after when the woods began to ring with new and various voices. Our two friends had returned, and brought with them some eight or ten additional men, and among that number two friendly Indians. These men all knew the woods well; and dividing off into parties, taking one of our men with each party, they sallied forth into the thickest of the woods, for the night. Each party had burning torches, that threw their light forth only to show the darkness and dangers around us. I say dangers, for more than once we saw some animals running from us, scared by the noise and the lights; these, we were told, were wolves. The whole of this night was spent in fruitless search.

The morning came, but no Mrs. Lewis. Poor Lewis! he looked the picture of despair. We came to the conclusion that she must have been destroyed by wild beasts, or we should certainly have found her. Exhausted and sleepy, about sun-

rise all the party had fallen into deep slumber, except Lewis and myself.

The sun had been up about three or four hours when a man on horseback halted before the door of the log cabin of our new friend, to which we had been invited, and where we were then resting, and inquired of me if there was "any body here that had lost a woman?" Lewis had heard the question, and rushing out of the house, said: "Yes, by G—d! I have!" And before the man could say any thing more, he had started to run back on the road from the direction in which we had come. But the man hallooed to him to come back: "You're going wrong; she's not that way; she's this way,"—pointing at the same time in the direction that we were to go on our journey. The fact was, that she had in her rambles got ahead of us, and we had been looking for her in the wrong direction. Lewis soon got his horse to his little wagon, and started off at such a speed that the man had to make extra efforts to keep up with him. In about two hours he returned with his wife, and Oh! what a rejoicing there was among our little troop of diverting strollers.

Her story was briefly this: When the party and the wagons had made a turn in the road, she took a by-path, supposing it would lead her across a shorter way, and bring her out near to, or ahead of us; but after walking some distance, she discovered it was probably leading her in a wrong direction. She listened, and could not hear the sound of voices or wagons; became frightened, commenced running and calling, until, quite broken down and exhausted, she sat down and cried, giving herself up as lost. As soon as the first paroxysm of grief was over, and she had gained a little strength, she walked on, without knowing where she was going. Darkness came on, and then her heart sunk entirely. The thought that she was doomed to perish in those woods was dreadful in the extreme. She sat down on a log, but was soon aroused from this by a howling of what she at first thought was a dog; but she saw by the gleam of its eyes, as it came near her, that it was some wild animal. She picked up a piece of wood and threw it at the beast; it ran a little way from her and stopped. She availed herself of this moment, and with desperate exertion climbed into the crotch of a tree, where she remained the whole night. At times she had to break off small limbs of the tree, to throw down and scare away what proved to be wolves. Her fears kept her awake the entire night. When it was clearly daylight, she ventured down from her place of safety, and commenced to walk through the woods. As soon as the sun rose

she took her "bearings" from it, and directed her steps southwardly, having heard Mr. Drake say something about our course being south when we started from Canandaigua. About two hours after sunrise she came to a deserted log-cabin; here she found a small portion of maple sugar, and being very hungry, she ate some of it, and it made her sick. She sat down on an old box in the cabin, and partly fell into a doze; from which she was startled by the growling and barking of a dog, that was standing at the door peering in at her, apparently not knowing what to consider her. While she was trying to to conciliate him, a man rode up to the door. It was the man who had hunted up Lewis, and led him where he recovered his lost wife. To the honor of human nature, be it said, none of these good Samaritans would accept a cent of recompense. The first two men said it was their *duty* that they had performed, and nothing more. Mr. Drake urged them to accept something as a requital, but they refused to the last. This was explained afterward by Lewis informing us that they were *brother Masons*. From that day I resolved to become a Free Mason, and I *did* become one.

With merry hearts we started the next morning for Olean, taking leave of our noble host and his family, whom I have never seen since; but that man's features will ever remain in my mind; and the name of "Jones" I shall ever respect!

CHAPTER II.

Travelling in a "Broad-horn Boat—Wolf Adventure—Practical Jokes—Novel Experiences in Boating—Sheep Capture—Lovely Indian Girl, Minne-cheeta—Sam Drake in Luck—Drake's sinister Designs frustrated.

OLEAN, in the summer of 1815, was a wild-looking place. To the best of my recollection, there were only two or three log cabins at the point at which we were to embark. Whether it is the same that is the site of the present town of Olean, which I have heard is a place of considerable business and importance, I am unable to determine, but presume it is. This, I believe, is the locality—or somewhere near it—in which it is said the celebrated violinist, Ole Bull, purchased, about twenty-five years ago, a large tract of wild land,—I think, one hundred and twenty thousand acres. His intention was to colonize this large body of land with his own countrymen, the hardy Norwegians; but in this he was lamentably disappointed, and most cruelly swindled. The undertaking, it was said, resulted in the entire loss of his fortune, which was of no small magnitude. But let me return to my story.

Mr. Drake immediately made a trade, disposing of his wagons and horses, and purchasing a flat-bottomed boat, known in those days as an "Ark," or "Broad-horn." It was about twenty-five feet long by fifteen wide, boarded up at the sides, and covered with an elliptical roof about high enough to allow a man of medium stature to stand erect beneath the centre. It was quadrangular, and intended to be a kind of floating house, of small dimensions. In one end of this boat were two rooms, partitioned off as bed-rooms, one for Mr. Lewis and wife; the other for the three single young ladies, the two Misses Drake and Miss Denny. The men, especially the young ones, were expected to "rough it," and rough it we did. While at Olean, a young gentleman of the name of Hull, by permission of Mr. Drake, joined our party. He had just left the army as a lieutenant; had been in the war on the "lines," where I had known him in 1814, in the American forces.

He was returning to his home, somewhere in the South-West. We found him to be a very pleasant companion, and his knowledge of army life quite useful to us, as the sequel will show. In about five or six days we were ready, and started to float down the Allegheny River as far as Pittsburg, situated at the junction of that river and the Monongahela, a distance by water of two hundred and sixty miles. In performing this voyage I think we were about ten days. The water was very low, and, with the exception of a few short rapids, quite sluggish, at times not floating us above two miles in an hour. We seldom moved at night, but usually tied up; and when we could, at some settlement on the bank of the river. The unmarried men would then go on shore, and endeavor to get beds in the farm-houses adjacent. If disappointed in that, we often had recourse, by permission, to the *barn*. The country then was very wild, the buildings small log cabins, and the accommodations very limited.

We left Olean about three o'clock a hot afternoon in the latter part of July, and did not get far that evening; I think only about twelve or fifteen miles. There was no house to be seen, and we were advised by Mr. Hull to land our boat at a small island, for fear of wild beasts, less likely to visit us there than on the mainland. We followed his advice, and after making our boat secure where we landed, we kindled a fire on shore; one of our ladies made coffee, and prepared supper for the party; and I must say, I never enjoyed a meal more in my entire life than that rural supper. After our evening meal, the men smoked, and the ladies sang, and the time passed delightfully.

After the ladies had retired, it being a clear and beautiful moonlight night, we young men took the skiff, rowed to the main shore, and landed to reconnoitre farther back than we had yet been. For myself, I determined to remain with the skiff, and to smoke my cigar (a habit I then indulged in), and the lad, James Drake, remained with me. Mr. Hull, Samuel and Alexander Drake, started back into the woods. They had been gone about fifteen minutes when I heard a smashing and crashing of dead limbs in the woods, and soon saw the three making for the skiff, in "double-quick time," Sam Drake ahead, Aleck next, and Hull bringing up the rear. The first two jumped into the skiff out of breath; Hull quickly followed, and pushed off the boat. When twenty or thirty feet from the shore, I learned what caused their hasty retreat. They had suddenly come upon two or three wolves, as they thought; for they only saw their eyes flash in the dark

undergrowth, and they did not stop to examine them very minutely. They considered that "discretion was the better part of valor," and beat a retreat without firing a gun, for it so happened they had none. Before we reached the island we could distinctly hear the howl of wolves in the direction from whence these young men had come. When I say *we* could, I mean all except Aleck Drake; he, poor fellow, was considerably deaf. But he had seen and heard enough of wolves to fill him with an awful dread of them. Having reached the island again, we concluded to hunt up some convenient nook, and retire to our "star-chambers." Aleck and myself found a spot at the head of the island where were some pieces of dry wood and slabs of boards, that had drifted there at high-water. Some trees that had lodged across each other furnished the means of support for a kind of roof, which we constructed out of the slabs. Underneath this we built a fire, partly to counteract the chill arising from the dew and night air (although it was July), and partly to keep away wild animals, should there be any on the island. We were all soon settled in our separate quarters, and fast asleep. About one or two o'clock in the night I awoke out of my first nap; I felt chilled and uncomfortably cold, so got up and replenished the dying embers with fresh fuel. While I sat ruminating, and looking at the fire, I came to the conclusion it was important that some one should supply it often, or I should not sleep comfortably the remainder of the night. I made up my mind that Aleck Drake should be my victim. He was very fond of practical jokes when he could victimize other people. I watched my opportunity, when he turned over, partly wakened by the cold, and starting suddenly to my feet, called out at the top of my voice, "Great God! what is that?" This roused him in alarm, and sitting up and looking at me, said, "What is the matter?" "Matter!" said I, "is it possible you can sleep with such sounds around you?" "What sounds?" said he. "Why, didn't you hear that wolf?" "No, of course I didn't; you know how deaf I am." "Well, I should think a *dead* man might almost have heard him," I replied. "What's to be done?" said he. "I am sure I can't tell," I answered, "unless it be to keep up a good fire, and if any wolves come, to throw fire-brands at them; they say that will scare them away." Suffice it to say I slept very comfortably till sunrise, being only disturbed occasionally by Aleck making up the fire. I did not tell him of the trick until we got to Pittsburg, when he swore he would have his revenge some day, and he did. But I'll not anticipate.

The next morning about sunrise the manager aroused us, and we prepared to cast off our boat from the shore. After partaking of a breakfast of coffee, boiled eggs, and ham, prepared for us by Mrs. Lewis and the young ladies, we decided not to stop for dinner, but to lunch on cold chicken, ham, tongue, sardines, crackers, and cheese. We had laid in some bottled porter also; most of the party being English, this kind of fare suited them. Miss Denny, Mr. Hull, and I were the only Americans; but, possessing our happy national peculiarity of adaptation to any situation, we got along very comfortably. About ten o'clock in the forenoon the ladies complained very much of the *heat*; they could not remain under the low roof of the boat, and came to the bow, where they could catch some portion of a breeze then blowing up stream. There was a space of about seven feet that had not been enclosed; but even here, screened as they were by umbrellas from the sun, there was much complaint. At the suggestion of the manager, one of our scenes was got out and unrolled, which being stretched over the top of the boat, presented a painted canvas surface of twelve by fifteen feet. This top was not far removed from a level, the centre being raised only enough to throw off water in the event of rain. Seated on this elevation, and screened from the sun, they obtained more air, and consequently more comfort. Thus situated, we floated down at a very slow rate; some reading, some sewing, some sleeping, and all without any thing to excite us, or disturb the quiet of the wilderness around, until about four o'clock in the afternoon.

In the morning, before starting, we had decided upon having two watches during the day; one to go on at seven in the morning, about the time of starting, the other one in the afternoon; this one to continue until the time of stopping for the night. The "senior watch," as it was called, went on in the first portion of the day, the "junior watch" in the last portion. The first consisted of the old gentleman (Mr. Drake Sr.), his youngest son, James, Mr. Hull, and myself. The second, of Mr. Lewis, Samuel and Aleck Drake, and Joe Tracy, the Irish wagoner. Now it so happened that three of the four of the afternoon watch were very fond of a "drop" (and I do not mean a "drop scene" — and yet such a scene was seen). On this occasion the morning watch, having no urgent responsibility resting on them, had quietly fallen into the arms of Somnus; the ladies ditto, with the exception of Mrs. Lewis, who was sewing at the bow of the boat. The afternoon watch — three of them — had taken "drops" so often that they were not conscious we were dropping

down the stream; and so they dropped off to sleep. The fourth being deaf, and having nothing to amuse him, "followed suit." For awhile all went smoothly and quietly enough; the good "Broad-horns" wended her slow but steady way wherever it pleased the current of old Allegheny to carry her. But the repose of the "seven sleepers" was suddenly disturbed by a shout from Mrs. Lewis, and an alarming cry that the boat was going over a waterfall. At the first exclamation made by her I started up, and having caught imperfectly the word "waterfall," and hearing a splashing in the water at the same time, concluded some one of the ladies had fallen overboard. I ran to the other side of the boat, determined to plunge in after her; but soon beheld Lewis "striking out" for the boat, having fallen overboard from the roof while asleep. Looking a little further ahead of us, about two hundred yards, I saw a "mill-dam" made across the portion of the river we were on, and toward which we were slowly drifting. There was no time to be lost; something had to be done quickly, or over the dam we must go! Hull, a cool man, not easily disconcerted, instantly suggested that all who could swim should jump overboard, and endeavor to arrest the progress of the boat, which, fortunately, was scarcely perceptible there. We had no oars for the large boat excepting one to steer by, secured to the stern, and the skiff-oars, which were too small to do any good. As soon as suggested, five stripped off their clothing, excepting pantaloons and socks, and plunged into the river, — Hull, Tracy, Sam, Aleck Drake, and myself. We succeeded in getting the boat safely to shore. There we tied up for a rest, and Lewis amused us while he indulged in a string of *dams*. He "d—d the man who would make a dam across such a d—d river as that!" and wished he was out of the "d—d country." If he was, he'd be d—d if he ever came "back again to it!"

After resting a little, we set to work to retrace the course we had come, until we should reach that point at which it was evident, now, the boat had taken the wrong "chute," or fork of the river. This we effected with much labor, by passing a rope to the shore, one end of which being attached to the boat, those on shore pulled it along, while the manager, Mr. Drake, kept it from the shore with a large steering-oar; and thus, by "main strength and awkwardness" we worked it up to the head of the island we were then on. Had not Mr. Hull suggested this way of "cordelling," practised on the rivers of the West in those days, I do not know how we should have got out of our unpleasant situation.

We decided to remain for the night where we were, being very tired, and the sun having gone down; so we tied up until morning. After having eaten our supper, and consequently feeling in a better humor, three of us — Mr. Hull, Samuel Drake, and I — walked to the mill-dam, a distance of about three-fourths of a mile, where we saw a man, and learned that in any but this unusual condition of the river our boat would have drifted down the other side of the island, but in that low stage of the water the stronger current was on the side leading to the mill. He said those who were in the habit of navigating this river knew of this dam, and avoided it. Mr. Hull asked him if he was not aware he had no legal right to obstruct the navigation in that way. He said objections had been started, but he had shown it was not the regular channel of the river, and so far had been able to hold his position. We found this man a jolly, good-natured miller, although he did not “live on the river Dee.” He brought out his jug of “old rye,” and Samuel Drake embraced it lovingly, Hull tenderly; but as to myself, “I touched not, I tasted not.” Oh, blissful days of innocence and cold water! We got back to our boat about midnight. We found all asleep except Aleck Drake and the Irishman, Tracy, whom Aleck had induced to remain awake to play cards with him; for he said he was afraid there might be “wolves” about. Poor fellow, he had got “wolf on the brain,” although I doubt if there was one on the island. We soon were in a blissful state of forgetfulness, and slept soundly till the morning. As soon as the day began to break the next morning, the “old gentleman” having gone to bed early and had a refreshing sleep, was up, and coming on where we young fellows were sound asleep, began singing with a loud voice, “Arouse ye, arouse ye, my merry Swiss boys!” etc. I heard him, but turned over and pretended to be asleep. Finding that did not have the desired effect, he gave us a touch of Shakespeare, from “Romeo and Juliet,” which, with his double basso voice, sounded like the rumbling of an approaching thunder-storm: —

“The grayed-eyed morn smiles on the frowning night,
 Checkering the eastern clouds with streaks of light;
 And flecked darkness, like a drunkard, reels
 From forth day’s pathway, made by Titan’s wheels.
 Night’s candles are burnt out, and jocund day
 Stands tip-toe on the misty mountain-tops.”

Which Sam Drake hearing, said, “Well, let him stand,— if he’s as tired as I am, he won’t stand long.” Satisfied that the “old gentleman” would not allow us to rest longer, I made

a virtue of necessity, arose without further delay, and going to a secluded spot, took a refreshing bath in the clear water of the Allegheny. We soon had our breakfast of warm coffee and cold meat, and towing our boat around the head of the island, shoved her out into the current, and took an everlasting leave of what Lewis (who was a Cockney) called *Hamsterdam*.

Nothing of note occurred during the day, except our boat running aground once on a sand-bar. We soon discovered she was not very hard on, and it was thought that if the young men would get out of the boat it would be light enough to pass over the bar. However, in this we were disappointed; it only floated a little further on the bar, and it was then found that we had to clear a way for her by removing the sand and pebbles in front. We commenced on the lower side of the crown of the bar, and removed the obstructions in the front and at the sides, after which we finally worked her over, by hard lifting and pushing. This detained us, I think, about three hours.

Near the hour of sunset we came to a well-cultivated farm, with a large frame barn and a double log-cabin. Every thing indicated a thrifty and well-to-do farmer. Here we tied up for the night. Soon after landing, Mr. Hull and I went up to the farm-house, for the purpose of ascertaining what chance there was for sleeping-quarters. We soon ascertained there was no possibility of our getting beds in that house. There were about twenty persons assembled for the purpose of witnessing a marriage ceremony. The eldest daughter of the farmer was to become, that night, the wife of a young man living in the neighborhood. The farmer, after telling us of his inability to accommodate us with beds, and the reasons for it, walked with us down to the boat. He was of a social disposition, and after inquiring about our destination, and becoming, as it were, a little acquainted, invited us to the wedding, — Hull, Samuel Drake, Alexander Drake, and myself. After supper we donned our best, and reached the house just as the ceremony was concluding; but not too late to witness the bride being kissed by a dozen country bumpkins. I was not a little amused to see Hull, among others, step up and kiss the bride, who blushed deeper than ever when Hull presented himself. Still, she did not resist his cool impudence; for Hull was very good-looking, and besides, gentlemanly in his manners. For myself, I was too modest to venture upon such a bold act, — an unfortunate quality that always stood in my way when ladies were about. However, I was afterwards

compensated by having the pleasure of dancing with the sister of the bride. Dancing, did I say? That's a mistake; I walked, or hopped through a dance with a young lady; I was never guilty of dancing. We passed the time very pleasantly until about midnight, when the company dispersed; and the two young Drakes, Mr. Hull, and I retired, as *Lope Tocho* says, to our "straw chamber," for we had got permission of the farmer to sleep in his barn. On examination of the interior of this "spacious mansion," I found the second story, or loft, on one side, filled with new hay; the other with bundles of oats, of the previous year's growth. At the suggestion of Mr. Hull, we chose the latter for our night's resting-place.

We had been asleep an hour or so, when I was awakened by some one calling from below. It was the "old gentleman," Mr. Drake. He knew of our exalted position; and feeling, as he said, chilled on the boat, he had come to discover whether our quarters were more comfortable than his own. His son Samuel urged him to get up on his side of the barn, saying it was very warm and comfortable there. With Samuel's pulling and my lifting, we with difficulty got the old gentleman up into the hay-loft; he was fleshy, and weighed about two hundred pounds. When up in the loft, he said, "Now boys, make a bed for me, and cover me up with hay, that I may sleep warm." His son made a deep hole in the hay, and we slipped the old gentleman into it, feet foremost, covering him up, all except his head; and he said he was very comfortable. I then retired to the opposite side of the barn, to my "straw chamber." I had just fallen into a sound sleep, when again I was aroused by some one calling out, in a distressed and supplicating voice: "Oh, Lord! Oh, dear! Take me out, I'm dying!" Alarmed, I jumped up and found the cry came from the hay-mow on the opposite side. I got up there as quickly as possible, and found the poor old gentleman, Mr. Drake, nearly suffocated. "What is the matter, sir?" said I. "Matter?" he replied. "I am frying in my own fat! Take me out of this hole, you young villains, or I'll murder some of you!" We pulled him out as quickly as possible; but he had not strength enough to stand up, and was as completely covered with perspiration as he could have been had he just passed through a "Russian bath." He laid on the outside of the hay, and gradually cooled off. When I got back to my straw again, I found Hull laughing and enjoying the fun that had just transpired on the opposite side. "Why, didn't you know," he said to me, "that new-mown hay would sweat a

man as quick as a vapor bath?" The fact is, the Drakes and myself had never known much about farming, having been all our lives in cities. After awhile we became quieted down, and slept till Lewis came, about sunrise, to call us up. We soon got our breakfast, went up to the farm-house, took leave of the family and the young bride, who blushed and looked pretty, wished the bride and groom many days of felicity, and took an everlasting leave of an apparently happy party. That day nothing of note transpired, except our getting aground again, and being obliged to take to the water, like Newfoundland dogs, and in that manner help the boat over shoal places. At night we stopped again where there was a farm-house; but it was a small log-cabin, with only two rooms, the family poor, and accommodations scanty. They were short of provisions. There had been three or four boats filled with soldiers that had passed down the river about a week previous, returning to the West from the Canadian lines, and they had swept the farms of almost every thing eatable, such as sheep, pigs, fowls, or eggs. This was a matter of some consequence to us, for we discovered about this time that we had eaten up all our meat provisions. That night we had to make our suppers, pretty nearly, on cheese and crackers. This, to men with ravenous appetites, was any thing but pleasant. However, we yielded to our fate with as good a grace as possible. The farmer granted us the use of one of his rooms to sleep in, but could not furnish a bed. Actors generally have their wits ready on any emergency; so we got our green baize carpet out; doubled and spread it on the floor, put our coats under our heads, and yielded to the condition of things. The man had no barn; he had a log stable, but his *cow* had a prior claim to that. Hull, in his soldier's life, and myself to a limited extent, had been used to "roughing it," but it was pretty hard going for some of the company. However, —

"Sleep, that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath,"

Soon wrapt us in its folds, and we knew no more until Lewis, whom we named the "early village cock," waked us with his "shrill notes" about sunrise the next morning. We made a scanty breakfast on dry crackers, and pushed out again into the stream. We got along very well until about three o'clock in the afternoon, when the ladies began to complain of being very hungry; and Mr. Drake, Sr., said he "*must* have some *meat*," for he was "falling away," and declared that his

“skin hung around him like an old lady’s loose gown.” So we landed our boat near a log cabin standing on a high bluff, and Lewis and I went ashore to hunt up provisions. When we reached the house we found only a woman and two or three children. She declared they had nothing in the way of meat or chickens to spare. “The soldiers had taken all,” she said. On going back to our boat, I discovered a few sheep feeding in an adjoining field. We instantly determined we would have one of them. Lewis said he was “something of a butcher,” and he was “bound to have one of those sheep;” so we started after them. They were shy of us; however, I got near enough to one to grab him by the wool, near the neck. He started off with me, dragging me a short distance, when I mounted his back; but he kept on, making for a small log stable. Reaching it, he made a jump through a small door, bringing my head in contact with the upper portion of the frame, and knocking me backwards on the ground. Lewis followed close, and before I had recovered from my discomfiture he had got into the stable and cut the throat of the sheep. We soon skinned and cleaned the animal, and dividing him, each shouldered half, and we returned to the house to pay for it. As we anticipated, the woman was very angry, called us all sorts of hard names, and refused to mention any price for the sheep. She sent one of her children off for her husband. As we did not wish to have any trouble with him, we laid down three silver dollars on the table, what we deemed the value of the sheep, and went to our boat with the “confiscated” mutton. We cast off from the shore immediately, and had only got pretty well under headway when the man appeared on the bluff, and running down until he got opposite to us, fired a gun loaded with duckshot. Fortunately we were aware of his intention, and all got under cover of our boat. The shot struck, but did not penetrate through the planks. Mr. Hull returned his fire with a rifle, in order to intimidate him, cutting off the branches of a tree just over his head. This had the desired effect; we left him stamping and tearing his hair on the bluff above us. I should have felt some compunctions of conscience had we not paid him a full price for the animal, which we ascertained afterwards we had done. A hearty meal was made at night on that mutton, and it was a standard joke with us for a long time afterwards.

We had among our stock farces of those days a comic opera, called “No song, no Supper,” in which Mrs. Lewis used to perform the character of *Margaretta*, and sing a song about meeting with a shepherd, and a pet lamb. The denouement of

the piece turns upon the song, and at the conclusion her sweet-heart has to say, "Egad, Madge, it was lucky you fell in with the sheep!" This always set the parties on the stage to laughing, and the audience, poor souls, never could imagine why.

That night we ate and drank, and sang, and slept well, for we had another barn for our domicile, and beds of sweet hay, well dried, on which to repose. "On beds of straw we stretched our lusty youth," while "Night, sable goddess! from her ebon throne, in rayless majesty stretched forth her leaden scepter o'er a slumbering world."

The next morn found us all within the barn, sound asleep, until our "cock, the trumpet of the morn, did with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat awake the god of day," and us sleepers also. We were soon up, breakfasted, and going downstream again. Nothing occurred during the day to stop our progress or break the solemn silence of the scene around us; not even a sand-bar obtruded its unwelcome head. We glided smoothly and silently along until about five o'clock in the afternoon, when we came to a settlement of log cabins. This was something of a novelty to us, not having seen so many houses huddled together since we left Canandaigua. We landed, and found it was a village of domesticated savages, known as the "Corn-planter's Village." I believe one of the former chiefs of the tribe had borne the name of "Corn-planter." We found them curious in regard to our purpose and our destination, friendly and obliging. We obtained from them some additions to our stock of edibles, such as green corn, squashes, and new potatoes. We also got some fish, which we had fried for our supper. But the greatest objects of interest to us young men were three or four half-breed young Indian girls, who came down to our boat soon after we landed. They seemed disposed to cultivate an acquaintance with us, for they giggled and coquetted with us from the shore above, and seemed to invite us to come to them. We noticed one of superior personal appearance, who stood a little apart from the others, and did not join in their silly mirth. As soon as we had concluded to stop for the night, and had secured our boat, three of us, Mr. Hull, Samuel Drake, Jr., and I, started for the village, with the ostensible object of procuring some supplies, but really our object was to see what sort of creatures these Indian girls were. As we approached them, three of those who had been most demonstrative prior to our coming ashore, seemed now the shyest. They stopped laughing, looked a little alarmed, and commenced retreating towards the "settle-

ments." Only one kept her position, with a mild and dignified look of self-possession. It was the one we had noticed who did not join with the others in their mirth. She had been watching us from the time we landed, and did not turn her eyes off as we approached her. When nearer I noticed that her face, which before had expressed more of calm surprise than any thing else, now lighted up with a smile of pleasure; and her eyes, which were large, dark, and brilliant, fairly danced in their sockets. It was very evident that one of us had made a conquest, and each flattered himself that *he* was the happy man. I say distinctly, "happy man," for at this distant day, of more than half a century, I pronounce that Indian girl at that time the most perfect model of natural female beauty that I ever beheld. There was no Indian apparently in her composition, except their native dignity of deportment. She was tall and graceful; her hair was long, black, and glossy, hanging in braids upon her shoulders. She was nearly white; only a slight tinge of the olive, through which the blush of the peach upon her cheek appeared, made one feel as though they would like to bite it! Her dress was simple and plain, consisting of moccasins over bare feet; these were embroidered with beads; above each foot appeared an ankle and leg delicately and beautifully moulded. From her bust, falling down about half-way between the knee and ankle, she wore a red cloth petticoat, neatly fitted around a delicate waist; above that appeared a white muslin or cotton undergarment, with a bosom *a la chemise*, exhibiting a "Cupid's nest" within, from which arose a neck delicate and beautiful as that of the Medicean Venus, — the whole woman presenting an object that would have moved an anchorite. And this beautiful creature was in love with one of us three young men. We saw it directly; we felt assured of it. She had not the city girl's art to conceal it. Which was the man? Not I, or I should never have been an actor, nor would these lines have been written. We approached her, and Mr. Hull addressed her in an Indian tongue. He had picked up a few Indian words in his intercourse with the different tribes during the war. To our great surprise, she replied in very good English, saying, "Why do you not speak to me American? You do not speak good Indian." Hull told her he did not suppose she could understand him. She said, "O, yes; my mother is American. I learned American at school. My father is Indian; I speak Indian to him — American to my mother." "Where did you go to school?" "Here in our village." "You have schools, then, here?" "Yes." Some other commonplace remarks passed between them. But

during the time he was talking, I noticed her eyes would only rest upon his face for an instant, and then seemed drawn forcibly in another direction. Just at my elbow, and a little way removed from Hull, stood Samuel Drake. I will simply observe at this point that Sam Drake was a "devilish good-looking fellow." I thought then a great deal more so than was desirable, for I couldn't help suspecting that this "*belle sauvage*" was casting her beautiful eyes upon him, and not on myself. And Sam had about arrived at the same conclusion; for finding she was answering Hull in monosyllables, he seized the occasion of a pause in the conversation, stepped up to her, and gently taking her hand, said, "Won't you tell me your name?" "O, yes!" she replied, her eyes dancing with delight, "My name is Minne-cheeta; in Indian, it means Waterspray."

Now I will take occasion to remark here, by way of parenthesis, that in the year 1867 I wrote a sketch, or tale, entitled "MAN-A-TU-A, or the *Spirit of the Glen*," a legend of Green Lake, Wisconsin, into which I introduced a love-story of an Indian girl, to whom I gave the name of "Minne-cheeta," and made the present young creature of whom I am now writing, the heroine of the romance. I merely mention this here that, should any one who may have read these lines meet with the above tale, they may understand the source from whence it came.

To return to my narrative. Sam Drake was a well-proportioned man, nearly six feet in height, with black hair, and a healthy English face, rather a pleasant expression, more indicative of good-nature than intelligence. When he chose to do so, he could make himself very agreeable in female society; but he was more fond of good eating and drinking than any thing else, and cared more for the society of *bon vivants* than that of ladies. In short, he was a sensualist in the full meaning of the word. He had no delicate or fine sensibilities in his composition. And yet this poor Indian girl, who was probably the very antithesis of him in temperament, could find something in him to love. Here was an instance of many that I have met with, illustrating that aphorism of Sheridan Knowles, that "nature delights in opposites."

Mr. Hull and I soon discovered that our company could be dispensed with, so we walked on ahead at a brisk rate, and quickly overtook the other Indian girls. They spoke pretty good English. One was a younger sister of her that we had left with Drake. We learned that the father of our beauty had been at one time a man of distinction among the Indians; had married a white woman, and settled down to a domestic

life. We went to their house, and found the man civil, but reserved and dignified. The wife was talkative and lively, and showed the remains of "beauty once admired." We obtained some vegetables from them, and a promise of shelter under their roof to sleep. Hull and myself returned to the boat with our provender, but left Drake walking with the beautiful Indian. When supper was ready Sam Drake had not returned. The old gentleman did not seem to like his absence. He probably thought, Englishman-like, that his son was not very safe alone among "American savages." After supper Hull proposed to me that we should go and see what had become of our missing man. The manager encouraged us in the idea, and we started for the village. We knew where it was most likely we should find him; so we went directly to the cabin of "la belle sauvage," and sure enough, there we found him, seated at a rude plank table with the old Indian and his family, making a supper on corn-bread, coffee, and a stew which I supposed consisted of potatoes and pork, but which I learned afterwards was potatoes and bear-meat. Sam was enjoying the novelty of the situation, and the girl appeared delighted. Supper being over, we all took seats on some rude benches, under a kind of porch in front of the door. We were soon joined by two Indian girls who had been with the party that we first saw on the river bank, and who lived near by. These two girls we now found quite sociable, and they conversed better than we could have supposed. Their father was a white man, their mother a "squaw." One was a funny little thing, and kept us laughing. After a while Drake proposed we should walk, and asked if they would show us the "village." The night was fine, and we started on our walk. Sam managed to secure his beauty to himself, so Hull and myself had to make ourselves agreeable to the others. We walked and laughed and talked till near ten o'clock, when Hull said to me in an undertone, "Take these girls back; I'll join you at the house;" and suddenly walked off. I waited some time for him, probably fifteen minutes, and then started back to the village. Shortly after reaching the Indian cabin, Hull appeared in sight, in advance of Drake and the girl, who followed not far behind. The three soon joined us, and it was evident to me that a cloud had passed over the horizon of the three since we had separated. A few general remarks were made by Hull and myself, when Drake said "good-night," and walked off towards the boat. I said to Hull, "What does that mean?" He replied, "Oh, never mind, I'll explain;" and commenced talking to the mistress of the cabin, the

Indian's wife. I observed that our beauty looked very sad, dropped her eyes, and soon retired into the cabin. It was not long before the old Indian said 'twas "time to sleep," and pointed to an adjoining room, where we were to repose. It was a kind of wing built adjoining the main double log-cabin. Hull and myself took the hint, and bid them good-night and retired.

I was quite at loss to understand Drake's conduct, for he was to remain with us. However, Hull soon set me all right. In an undertone he said to me: "Drake's angry with me I know, and I expect to have some unpleasant words with him, — with all my heart! Any fellow who will attempt to take advantage of a poor girl, Indian or otherwise, when he sees she loves him, is *no man*; and I'm prepared to tell him so if he says any thing to me about it." "But what has he *done*?" I said. "Well," he replied, "You know when I left you?" "Yes." "I suspected something wrong in Drake's intentions; for I know, and so do you, he is a libertine where females are concerned; and so it suddenly occurred to me I would find where he had gone with that girl, and I did!" "Well, what was the result?" "I'll tell you. As I was just about to pass around a clump of bushes, I discovered them sitting on an old tree that was lying on the ground. Drake was endeavoring to take liberties with her person, which even Indian decorum would not permit. She appeared earnestly to resist. I watched them for a few minutes, until I could comprehend the situation, and satisfy myself of the girl's earnest virtuous resistance. I then suddenly appeared upon the scene, as if by accident, and thus put a stop to the catastrophe. Both seemed confused and embarrassed. I said the party were waiting to return home, and told the girl her sister wished me to call her. I turned to go back; they followed me in silence; and I took care that he should not get her again out of my sight. Now," said he, "what do you think of it?" I could not, of course, but approve his conduct. We had a long talk about it, which would be useless to repeat here; and we fell asleep. The next morning by daylight this Indian family were stirring, and that awoke us. We arose, sought our host, wished to pay him for our lodgings; but he refused to accept any pay. We took leave of him and his wife, left a farewell with the mother for the daughters, not then visible, and walked to our boat. None of our party were up but Mr. Lewis and the man Tracy, the latter preparing a fire for the purpose of making some coffee for breakfast. Sam Drake was yet asleep on some trunks in the boat. We soon

had breakfast, which Sam partook of in sulky silence, and we cast off our boat from the shore. We had not gone far when I beheld our Indian beauty and her sister standing on the bank a little below us, and gazing with melancholy looks upon our receding boat as we passed them. Sam Drake observed them too, and I thought he looked unhappy and nervous. In a few minutes our boat reached a bend in the river, and was about to pass out of sight; I took off my hat to wave them an adieu, when I saw our beautiful savage throw up her arms above her head, then around her sister's neck, and then sink down upon her knees. Our boat just then turned the point. I never saw her more. Drake drew his hat down over his eyes, folded his arms, and strode to and fro on the roof of the boat for about half an hour, deeply absorbed in thought.

CHAPTER III.

Night at a Farm-house — Stormy Day — New Version of Richard III. — Featherbeds in August — “Carriages” for the Party.

I HAVE formerly said that the face of Samuel Drake, Jr., was more indicative of good nature than intelligence. This was not less true of him than of many others I have met with in the world whose faces were an index of their minds. He was weak, but not naturally vicious. He was the victim of his appetites, and they finally destroyed him. Gifted by nature with a strong and healthy constitution, had his intellect been equal to his *physique*, and had reason instead of his passions governed his acts, he might now have been alive, instead of being buried in a premature grave. Poor Sam! I will take the occasion to say here, lest I should not have an opportunity hereafter: you were liberal, kind-hearted, and just, except, as I said before, when women “crazed your brain;” social in disposition, all generous spirits sought your society, and enjoyed your companionable qualities. Charitable in your nature, and ready at all times to give your talents or your money to relieve distress in any one; but—well, no matter. As *Prince Hal* says of *Falstaff*, “I could have better spared a better man!”

Let us proceed with our journey. The day that we left the Indian village was passed throughout in general silence and idleness; it was hot and sultry, and no one seemed inclined to talk. The ladies read or slept, and the men reclined under the awning of our boat, too indolent to say or do more than necessity compelled. Samuel Drake was gloomy and sulky. No explanation of the previous night’s affair was sought by either party. There was an evident coolness, but nothing more. It was not Hull’s place to introduce the subject, and Drake’s silence arose from the fact that he was a little ashamed of his conduct,—so I learned of him some months after. The day had been hot and comfortless, when about six o’clock in the afternoon we beheld a log house on the bank of the river,

and we concluded to stop here for the night. On going to the house, we found only a woman and some children. The woman's husband was not at home, and she told us that she had no accommodations for us. We wished to buy some provisions, but she "had none to spare; the soldiers had taken everything." We then inquired whether there was another settlement near, on the river below. She replied, "Yes, about five miles further on." Upon consultation, we concluded to go on to this other house, and so shoved out into the stream again. We found afterwards that this woman had deceived us, and had no doubt done so designedly, lest we should conclude to stop there all night, — fearful, possibly, that we might murder them all. We did not reach this house that she spoke of until about ten o'clock that night, and then we found the distance we had come from the last house was ten miles, instead of five. We soon came to the conclusion that we had been benefited by the woman's having urged us ahead. It was very evident we had better prospects of comfortable quarters, for we found everything about this place indicating cleanliness and plenty. It was a substantial Pennsylvania farm-house, large and well built, such as is often found in that State, with surroundings in keeping. The proprietor was courteous and obliging, and put himself to considerable inconvenience to make us comfortable. As soon as we landed, he came down to the river to ascertain our object at that late hour. We told him who and what we were, where we were going, and what we would like to obtain of him. We soon found he was something more than an unlettered farmer; that he had studied and practised medicine several years, not far from Philadelphia. As soon as he learned we were a company of comedians, he seemed to "cotton to us" at once; said he had visited the theatre in Philadelphia when he was attending medical lectures there. He remembered Messrs. Wood and Warren, managers and actors; old Francis and Jefferson, the latter the grandfather of our present popular comedian of that name; and he seemed delighted to have met with us. He said that his family had, most of them, retired for the night, but they would be delighted to see us, and insisted upon our going up to his house, late as it was. We told him we did not like to disturb his family, as they had retired, and that they could not but be annoyed by our intrusion. He said it would not be considered an intrusion; that his wife would feel much annoyed if she did not see us. Finally we young men went up to his house with him. He ushered us into a parlor very nicely furnished,

in a plain way. Among other furniture, there was a piano and some music, and hanging against the wall there was a violin. We were quite surprised. There was, altogether, an air of neatness and home comfort that we had not met with lately, and that made us feel as though we had got among civilized people again. The doctor—for so I must call him, as I cannot at this distant day recall his name—was a man who enjoyed life as it passed. He brought out a bottle of old peach-brandy, and invited us all to partake with him. Those who indulged in that way, drank. He then excused himself for a few minutes, and went into an adjoining room. While he was absent, Sam Drake, whose heart had become warmed up with the peach-brandy, stepped to the corner of the room and took down an old, time-discolored, black-looking violin. Now Sam was a very good musician, having been educated as a violin-player, and intended by his father to be a regular orchestra musician. After drawing the bow over it, he said, “This is a good instrument,” and immediately began preludizing. He then played the “Blue Bells of Scotland,” with some beautiful variations, a portion of which were of his own composition. Very shortly two female night-caps were to be seen peeping out at a side-door, slightly opened; then, shortly after, two little bobtail shirts were seen at another side-door; and not long after, the lady of the mansion, with her husband, presented herself from another door, and advancing, was introduced to us by the doctor as his wife. She was a very pleasant-looking-woman, apparently about forty years of age, with rather a *distingué* air, easy and unembarrassed. She welcomed us as though she meant it; regretted that we had not arrived a little earlier, so that she might have been better prepared to entertain us; and concluded by saying she had ordered some supper to be put on the table for us, and hoped we would excuse her for not having any thing warm. Drake said to the doctor, “You have a very good violin here, sir. Do you play?” “Well, sir,” he said, “I scrape off a few reels and jigs, and old-fashioned dances; but I can’t call it *playing*.” He then urged Drake to give them some more music. Sam then played “Pray, Goody, Please to Moderate the Rancor of Your Hate,” with variations. It is from an old English opera called (if I am not mistaken) “The Beggar’s Opera.” It is a beautiful old song, and very sweetly he played it. The lady was in ecstasies, the doctor delighted; the two night-caps evidently forgot they were night-caps, and the two little bob-tails had got fairly out into the parlor before the mother saw them, and drove them back to their room. The peach-brandy

circulated again, while the lady went to see that the supper was getting ready ; and Hull astonished us all by sitting down to the piano and playing one or two marches and some other pieces in a very creditable manner. The lady then invited us into another room, and we sat down to a very excellent impromptu supper. Two young misses came into the room, whom the doctor introduced as his daughters ; the eldest probably seventeen, and the other three or four years younger. They were fresh, country-looking girls, and no doubt became quite pretty in a few years after. Supper being over, we returned to the parlor, where we learned some matters relative to the doctor's private history. He was a native of Pennsylvania, of German origin ; was reared on a farm until he was seventeen years of age, then sent to college to complete his education ; commenced the study of medicine at twenty-one ; attended medical lectures in Philadelphia and New York for two years ; married his wife in the city of New York, and commenced the practise of medicine at Lancaster, Pennsylvania ; continued there four years, when his father died, leaving a very considerable property to himself, a brother, and two sisters. On obtaining his portion of the estate, he turned it into cash, and being tired of a doctor's life, resolved to become a settled farmer ; purchased the land on which he was then living, built on and otherwise improved it, and had resided there about twelve years. His wife was a comely woman, and had evidently been used to good society, having interesting manners ; such a lady as was very seldom found in the Western wilds in those days. She possessed the faculty, in no ordinary degree, of making herself agreeable and her guests comfortable. We conversed awhile on the subject of the stage, with which she seemed familiar. She spoke of some of the favorite actors and actresses she had seen perform in New York, — as Mr. Thomas A. Cooper, the great tragedian of that day ; George Frederick Cooke she had seen as *Falstaff*, and *Richard III.* ; she had seen Mr. Thomas Hilson, comedian Mrs. Charles Young, called the "pretty Mrs. Young ;" Mrs. Darley, Mrs. Mason, and others whose excellence I could join with her in praising, having had the pleasure of witnessing their performances afterward. The doctor then proposed we should have some more music ; and the madame requested Drake to favor her with a violin solo. He asked the doctor if he had any music for the violin. To which he replied, he had some old books of music that were his father's ; he had looked over them once, but they were harder than Greek for him to master, and he never touched them again. He got them out, dusted them,

and Drake looked over them, saying, "Why, sir, you have some valuable music here. Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, — splendid!" The madame opened her piano. Drake placed one of the books upon it and played a fine sonata, — I think he said one of Beethoven's. I need hardly say, all were highly pleased. Mr. Hull then requested the lady of the house to give us some music, having previously understood that she played. She readily consented, with the proviso, "if the gentleman will accompany me with the violin." Drake bowed his assent. She produced a pretty lively piece for piano and violin, — piano obligato — which she played very well. She was a good *timist*, a rare quality in lady parlor-performers. After two or three more pieces of music from Drake and the lady, the latter begged that we would excuse her, and with her daughters left us for the night. The doctor introduced the peach-brandy again, of which those who liked it partook; and finding we had reached the small hours, I proposed we should retire, apologizing to the doctor for having disturbed his family until such an unseasonable hour. He said no apology was necessary; instead of a disturbance, it had been a pleasure to him and his family; but as we had been travelling all day, it would be selfish in him to urge us to remain longer from our rest. So saying, he took a light and requested we would follow him to where some beds were ready for us. This was a surprise, as we did not expect to be bedded as well as boarded; however, we did not need much pressing to accept an additional comfort. There were two double beds in the room, and a pallet on the floor, made of blankets and quilts, as he said, for the lad, — that was James Drake. Then, bidding us good night, he left us. I ought to have mentioned that during the time the doctor was absent from the parlor, and his wife was dressing to meet us, he had dispatched our man, Joe Tracy, to the boat with a ham, a pair of live chickens, and sundry vegetables; also an invitation to the ladies and gentlemen in the boat to come up to the house and take supper with him. But not one of them came.

Mr. Drake, Sr., sent a note, written with a pencil, to his son Samuel, to make their apologies, on the score of its being too late. This note Sam handed to the doctor. Being very tired, we took to our comfortable bed with a great deal of pleasure. We all slept soundly until we were awakened by Tracy, who had been sent by the manager to hurry us on board. Our rising aroused our host, who seemed very much disappointed that we were going before breakfast. He ex-

pected all the ladies and gentlemen, to take breakfast with him. He went down to the boat with us, and used all the arguments he could think of, apparently, to induce us to remain. He observed the morning was cloudy, a storm of rain was threatening, we could not make any great distance on such a day, and he would be most happy to entertain us until the weather was more favorable. But 'twas all in vain; Mr. Drake was anxious to reach Pittsburg, and go we must. There was no sun to annoy us, it being cloudy, as he said, and we ought to get on as fast as possible. The manager then offered to pay the doctor for the ham, chickens, etc., but he would not listen to any thing of the kind. He said he felt under great obligations to us for having stopped and visited him, and hoped the day would come when we should meet again. After many kind words on both sides, and a promise from the doctor to call and see us if he visited Pittsburg before we left there,—an event not improbable, as he said,—we took leave of our kind host. We saw no more of him, except just after we had got a little way from his landing, when we beheld him and his family on the bank waving adieus to us. I regret it is not in my power to recall this gentleman's name. It was a German name, and difficult for an American to remember.

For two hours of the forenoon of this day we progressed very pleasantly. The sun was obscured with clouds; there was a fresh breeze most of the time in our favor, the exceptions being where, in some instances, the river made an unfavorable bend. But about twelve in the day the clouds that threatened during the forenoon opened, and poured their contents upon us in torrents. We were compelled to seek shelter under the roof of our boat. We began to wish we had accepted the doctor's hospitable invitation to remain with him through the day; to increase our regret, we found that the roof of our boat leaked, and the rain found its way through in sundry places. We saw no chance of shelter by landing, there being no house in sight; nor did we come to one until the rain had so completely wet us that we concluded it not worth while to lose time by stopping for the residue of the day. Besides, the fury of the storm had in part subsided, and we thought would soon cease entirely. But in this we were disappointed, for about three or four o'clock in the afternoon it commenced raining hard again, and then we were as before, without a house in sight. The ladies had been able, by keeping within the magic circles of umbrellas, to avoid the entire drenching that we men had met with. After encounter-

ing the renewed storm for about an hour, we came in sight of a small town on the left bank of the river. I think it was called Warren, or Warrenton, or Warrington. As soon as we began to approach near the town, there was a general expression of a wish to stop for the night. Amidst one of the most violent rain-storms I ever witnessed, we landed our boat at this small town. It was decided by the company that the ladies had best remain on the boat under protection of their umbrellas, until some of us had gone up into the town and endeavored to procure a covered carriage to take them up in. This was undertaken by Sam Drake and myself. We were directed by the sign to a house, the "hotel" of the village. We inquired for a covered vehicle, but there was none to be had there. The one owned by the landlord had been sent that morning from home with a portion of his family, and he could not inform us where we could get one. It was a very small country village; I should suppose, as well as I can remember, of about five hundred inhabitants. By the time we had discovered that no carriage could be obtained, the rain had to a considerable degree subsided; so we went down to the boat, with the intention of getting the ladies up to the house in the best way that was possible. That best way proved to be exceedingly bad. They were compelled to walk up a very steep bank, on a road running from the river, and just then about ankle-deep with mud. It was not long before we found ourselves very comfortably situated. The landlord's assistant had a rousing fire made in one of the old-fashioned Pennsylvania fire-places, and the men had found something at the bar to warm the inner man. The ladies had scraped and otherwise got clear of a large portion of the mud with which they had been loaded, and we all assembled around the old hearth as merry as so many erickets. This was really the first disagreeable day we had encountered since leaving Olean, and we bore it with great philosophy, considering we were actors, whose temperaments are generally very excitable, and easily affected by passing events. We had a very good supper about sundown, and passed the evening in relating anecdotes. The old gentleman was unusually cheerful, and related some very funny events happening in the course of his itinerant theatrical life in England, one of which I will relate here, for I think it good, and do not believe it has ever before appeared in print, — at least I have never met with it.

In England, many years ago, there were two actors who trod the boards of a first-class provincial theatre on the same night and in the same play, who had been strolling friends

together in years gone by. One of these was a tragedian of some notoriety, the other a low comedian of good standing; the former at this time performing as a star, the other as a stock actor. The tragedy for the night was Shakespeare's "Richard III." When the manager of that theatre came to cast the play, which, in theatrical parlance, means to assign the characters to the different performers, he was a little perplexed to find men enough to fill the different parts. The tragedian, looking over the names of the gentlemen of the company, said: "Why, here is Mr. H——; [that was his old strolling friend] you have not got him in for any part." To which the manager replied: "Oh, no; he is our principal low comedian, and there is no part in the piece that I could ask him to perform." "But," said the tragedian, "he is an old friend of mine, and I think would do one of the minor parts to oblige me. If you will allow me, I will speak to him about it." After some hesitation the manager consented, and 'twas agreed he should ask him to do the short part of *Tyrrel*, who is employed by *Richard III.* to murder the two young princes, the children of *Queen Elizabeth* and *Edward IV.*, these children standing in the way of *Richard's* ambition. Mr. H. consented to do the part to oblige his friend—but at the time resolved that the manager should not be encouraged by it, so as to allow him to be called on again for a similar act of courtesy. He told the manager that as he was not in the habit of speaking tragedy, he was afraid he should become nervous and frightened, and make some unpleasant blunder. Well, the day came, and the rehearsal; but Mr. H. was not at the rehearsal, and sent an excuse that he was not well just then, but would, he thought, be all right at night. So rehearsal passed off without him. Well, night came, and the scene came, and at the proper cue, on stepped Mr. H. Now the little boys were always in the habit of shouting when Mr. H. appeared, and saying aloud, "There's the funny man," and they did the same now. And the men who had been in the habit of seeing him only in low comedy laughed when he came on, because they saw him trying to look tragic. Even his friend the tragedian couldn't help smiling at his attempt to put on a tragic face. But as soon as a little quiet was obtained the dialogue proceeded. In order to have the point understood, I give the words of the text, as near as I can remember them. I have not the play at hand to refer to.

Richard—Now, *Tyrrel*, are the brats disposed of? Speak!
Am I happy?

Tyrrel — If to have done the thing you gave in charge
Beget your happiness, be happy then,
For it is done!

Richard — And did'st thou see them dead?

Tyrrel — I did, my lord!

Richard — And buried, my good *Tyrrel*?

Tyrrel — In that, I thought to ask your Highness's pleasure.

Richard — Get a coffin, bore it full of holes,
Cram them both in, and throw them in the Thames;
Once there, they'll find their way to the bottom.

All went on right till it came to the question of —

Richard — And buried, my good *Tyrrel*?

Instead of the words of the author, Mr. H. said, with some hesitation : —

Tyrrel — Yes, my lord.

Here was a stopper! The play could not go on, for Richard could not proceed with his next speech. The tragedian was taken by surprise. He did not know what to say. He frowned, bit his lips, and walked up the stage. Those of the audience who were familiar with the dialogue of this play — and who is not? — laughed and shouted, and cried “Bravo! H —.” And Mr. H. stood still all the time, with a serious face of astonishment, as much as to say, “What is all this about? What does it all mean?” The tragedian, after a few minutes, having recovered his equanimity, came forward and said: “Hark thee, *Tyrrel*. *Dig the brats up again!* Get a coffin, bore it full of holes,” etc. At this the people fairly shouted again, “Bravo for *Richard!*” And the demonstrations were so uproarious, it was some time before the dialogue of the continuous scene could be heard. It is sufficient to say here the manager never cast Mr. H. again for any thing in tragedy.

By the time we had tired of relating theatrical jokes, and had, among us, used up some of the landlord's peach-brandy and bottled beer, it was time to retire for the night. I found an opportunity to take the bar-keeper aside, whose business it was to assign us rooms; from him I got the privilege of a bed in a small room, not far removed from the bar-room, which he told me I could have to myself. It was the one the landlord's two sons usually occupied; but they were away from home. So, giving me a lighted candle, he showed me the door and bid me good-night. I noticed he had a small cot bed within his bar room, an apartment enclosed with lattice work; it was here that he slept. The house was very quiet, and I soon fell into a profound sleep. About two

o'clock I awoke from a frightful dream: that I had died and been sentenced to the "infernal regions;" that his satanic majesty had ordered that I should be put into a cauldron of boiling oil, and that his order had been put into effect. Struggling under the supposed torture of the heated oil, I sprang up in bed, and awoke to find myself, as Mr. Drake had said when in the new hay, "frying in my own fat." I then noticed for the first time that I was buried in the middle of an immense feather bed, which almost closed above me. Just think, a feather bed in August! Phew! it makes me sweat now to think of it. As soon as I was entirely awake, and conscious of my situation, I got out of bed; and my first impression led me to seek the bar-keeper, for the purpose of obtaining some other place to sleep. I soon found his resting-crib, and after thundering at the door awoke him, and not in the best of humors at being thus disturbed. His first salutation was, "What the h—ll do you want?" "That's it," I said; "I've just come out of hell, and I wish you to show me some other place." At which he struck a light, and holding it close to my face to see who it was, he said: "Look here, Mr. Showman; if you want to play any of your jokes, you'd better hunt up some other person, for I can tell you you've waked up the wrong man." At the same time drawing back with a threatening action, which led me to the conclusion I could get a fight on my hands at the shortest notice. So I adopted the soothing system. I said, "Look you, my friend; I am sorry to disturb you, but I can't sleep in your bed." This I found was throwing oil on the fire, instead of water; for it flashed up fiercer than ever. He fairly jumped up and down with anger. "Hark ye," he said; "if you don't take your d—d show carcass out of this house, I'll put you out! I tell you there are no better beds in the country, and you have one of the best in the house." "That's what I complain of," I said; "the bed is *too* good. If it was a *hard* one, I could sleep very comfortably on it, but there's a mountain of feathers, and the middle is hotter than Vesuvius." He paused a moment and looked at me; then in a more subdued tone said: "Well, now you begin to talk sense; why did you not say so before?" I said: "You would not give me time. Now if you will just let me sleep in your barn, I think I should have a good night's rest; and I'll pay you just the same as though I lodged in the house." Upon this he began to laugh, and said: "Our barn won't suit you, my young hoss. I can fix you off, I think, without stabling you. Come." With that he took his light and walked to the room I had left. He

stripped off the old clothing and the feather bed, displaying a straw one that was underneath; then putting some quilts on the straw bed, and the sheets, told me to try it now. I did, and said it was very comfortable. He bid me good-night, and I slept soundly until a bell was rung at my room door loud enough to wake the dead. I arose and found them all eating breakfast. I related my adventure of the night, and we all had a hearty laugh.

The day was clear and fine, and somewhat cooler in consequence of the rain that had fallen the day before. As soon as we had got through breakfast we began to make preparations for starting. The first business was to procure some means of getting our ladies to the boat without wading through the mud again. The manager, who always rose early, had heard of a man who had a "rough sort of conveyance," as he was told. He sent for the man, and without saying a word to any one of the company or the landlord, engaged the man to "*take a load*" down to our boat. About the time Mr. Drake had settled our bill with the landlord, he had our ladies summoned to come out on the front porch, and to make haste, for the carriage was waiting to take them down to the boat. "A carriage!" they all exclaimed. "A carriage!" said Julia Drake, a wild young thing, then about fifteen years of age. "How fine we shall be." Presently down stairs they all came in a body and rushed out upon the porch, when the "old gentleman" coolly pointed to an *ox-cart* that was standing before the door, and told them to "jump in." If a man such as Hogarth had been present, he could have established a fame at once by sketching the different expressions of the faces at that moment. "What!" said Julia, "get into that huge-looking thing?" "La, pa!" said Martha, "what,—climb up there?" Mrs. Lewis, who was quite fleshy, said she "could never get into that thing without a ladder!" But Miss Denny, with the "spunk" (to use a Yankeeism) of an American girl, said: "Well, I never saw the place yet I couldn't climb to, if I set myself about it." So saying she stepped out to the cart, saying to me, "Ludlow, lend me a hand." I did so, and before they could see how she did it, placed one foot on the hub, and with a bound landed inside the cart, to the great applause of the by-standers. In the meantime, the landlord had got out a chair, from which, with considerable trouble, the others got in. The "old gentleman," and James, his son, were the only males who got in; and the cavalcade started for the boat. It was with some difficulty the cart got down to the boat without upsetting. Some of us were ex-

pecting it would stick in the mud ; and so kept along just behind it, to lend a helping hand. They got down, however, safely ; and we soon were off again among the drift-wood of the Allegheny. When about a hundred yards from the shore, the people we had left gave a shout of “ three cheers for the show-folks ! ”

CHAPTER IV.

"Showman" — Progress, and Halt for the Night — Search for Provisions and Lodging — The Ghost Scene in "Hamlet" acted with desired Effect — Arrival at Pittsburg — Novel Expedient to secure Quiet at Night — Mr. Hull's Departure.

IN my early theatrical career I had a great horror of being called a "showman;" and I must confess I have not at any time been particularly fond of the appellation, even to this day. But, in the period I am now speaking of, every individual who presented himself to the public and asked a price of admission for what he said or did, was termed "showman;" from the Italian organ-grinder, with his monkey, to the lecturer on astronomy, geology, or any other branch of learning. But the name has become less appalling since so many ladies have turned public lecturers, or "show-women," on various branches of science and light literature. The ladies always dignify whatever they embark in; and I now feel a little more reconciled to the idea of having been called a "showman." Notwithstanding the word "showman" was grating to my ears, I consoled myself with the remembrance of what Shakespeare says in his play of "All's Well that Ends Well," —

"From lowest place, when virtuous things proceed,
The place is dignified by the doer's deed."

Whenever I met with persons whose ignorant remarks were annoying, or circumstances in which my situation was unpleasant to me, from an apparent or real neglect arising from my profession, I always thought of what my friendly landlord at Skeneateles said to me, and the lines of Pope he quoted on that occasion always came to my mind. I will repeat them here, for the consideration of all modest, aspiring young men:—

"Honor and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part, there all the honor lies.
Fortune in men has some small difference made;
One flaunts in rags, one flutters in brocade;

The cobbler aproned, and the parson gowned,
The friar hooded and the monarch crowned.
What differ more (you cry) than crown and cowl?
I'll tell you friend, a wise man, and a fool.
Worth makes the *man* and *want* of it, the *fellow*.
The rest is all but leather and prunella."

But let us proceed on our journey. The day was hot and sultry, the face of the country less wild and uncultivated; we were getting again into civilized regions, compared with what we had passed through. We met more frequently with well-cleared farms and better built houses. Every thing indicated that this part of the river had been settled by civilized man many years in advance of the portion we had passed above. We were nearing the point for which we embarked at the head waters of the Allegheny River. This portion of country was early settled by French people from Canada; and near the present site of Pittsburg was a French military post called Fort Duquesne, during the period that France claimed and held the region of country around, and near here. This fort, when the country fell into the hands of England, was called "Fort Pitt," in compliment to the great English statesman of that name; hence arose Pittsburg. Well, as I said, the day was hot and very uncomfortable, and several times we urged the manager to allow us to stop the boat under some overhanging trees, lay up till the heat of the day was over, and run during the night to make up for the time we stopped. But he constantly refused, saying if "*he* could stand, it he was sure we young people ought not to complain." "Besides," said he, "if we continue on through the day, and run at night also, we will reach Pittsburg early the next morning, where we will have plenty of time to rest." So on we went; about sundown, coming in sight of a substantial-looking farm-house, the "old gentleman" gave in, saying he *must* stop. He was "feeling unwell and faint; must have some strong coffee made, and eat something substantial, or he would be very ill." Of course, we did not object to this proposition, so stop we did; and after securing our boat, Sam Drake, Hull, and myself, the usual foragers, taking Joe Tracy with us, to bring to the boat whatever we were able to purchase, started up to the house with the intention of obtaining some meat or poultry. After finding the proprietor of the place, we induced him to sell us (by paying him extravagantly for them) a quarter of mutton, half a dozen chickens, and some eggs; these we despatched at once to the boat by Tracy. We then spoke to the landlord in regard to the chance of sleeping under his roof. Having paid him well for what he had

already got, he was encouraged to "skin us" further; so after some talk we bargained with him for the room we were then standing in. It had two double beds in it, and I was to have a pallet on the floor. The room was on the first floor, and had two doors, one a front and the other a rear. I mention these particulars, that what I shall hereafter relate may the more readily be comprehended.

Now there was an impression on the mind of Sam Drake that possibly, after the "old gentleman" had got a good supper, he would feel better, and might determine to "run all night." So he made this condition with our host: that if he should conclude *not* to stop for the night, he would let him know it in half an hour. We returned to the boat and got our supper. The manager still complained of being unwell; the heat, he said, had affected him very seriously. He thought he had some fever, and had resolved to remain where we were for the night. Sam Drake then told his father that he had a bed engaged for him conditionally at the house, and wished him to go up there and sleep; but he declined for several reasons, and said he would remain on the boat.

While we were eating our supper, another flat-boat, larger than ours, came down the river, having mules on board intended for the Southern market; this boat was landed a little above our own. We paid no attention to the circumstance, more than merely noticing their arrival. Supper being over, two or three of us walked up to the house, thinking we might as well let our host know that we expected to stay all night with him, although we deemed it superfluous after what we had said to him. On walking into the room in which we were to lodge, we saw two filthy looking Dutchmen sitting there smoking their pipes. The room smelt like a horse-stable. The moment we entered we suspected what had occurred; sought the man of the house, and discovered our suspicions were well founded. He had agreed that these mule-handlers, who really smelt worse than their mules, should have a bed in the same room with us. We remonstrated, but he pretended to think that we were to inform him in half an hour if we wished the beds. In vain we explained that we told him if we did not see him again in half an hour he might consider the room engaged to us. But the fact was he had determined not to understand it. When we went back into the bed-room, one dirty fellow had actually lain down on one of the beds with all his filthy clothes on, and the two had filled the room with tobacco-smoke of the vilest scent. We went immediately down to our boat and held

a council of war. We determined to get those fellows out! But how? That was the question. After starting various schemes which did not appear likely to succeed, Sam Drake proposed we should get up the ghost scene in "Hamlet." He said if that wouldn't move them, nothing would. The idea seemed a good one, and we set to work to arrange it. Sam Drake was to personate *Hamlet*, with which character he was familiar; Aleck Drake was to do *Bernardo*; and I was to speak what would be required of *Horatio*, a character I had been studying while on the river, so as to be ready in it at Pittsburg. Mr. Hull was to do the *Ghost of Hamlet's* father, leaving the speeches out, which he knew nothing of. We arranged that when the ghost was ready, James Drake should bring him to the back door of the house, and at a signal which we were to give him, he was to get the ghost close to the back door, then to crow like chanticleer, and quickly get out of sight. We were puzzled how we should make up the ghost so as to be frightful. The real armor, such as the *Ghost* usually wore, would not do. At last Aleck thought of a white canvas dress usually worn by the animated statue of *Don Guzman*, in the pantomime of "Don Juan," a piece often played in those days. The dress was made in the form that some little boys' dresses are made, — legs and body joined together; and in this case the feet were also added, making one undivided garment from the toes to the neck. It opened in the back, through which a person got into it. There was a head-piece of the same sewed to the dress, which covered the hair and neck. Over this was thrown a kind of herald's cloak of the same white material, generally canvas or course muslin, the whole being left white, except where were some shadings in black, to make the appearance of rivets in the armor; the whole intended, in the pantomime, to represent a white marble figure of a man in armor. The appearance was extravagant, and ridiculous in this instance, but it answered the purpose intended. His face was to be whitened with chalk and flour, and marked with burnt cork, in order to make it look cadaverous and corpse-like. After getting Mr. Hull dressed, Sam, Aleck, and myself went up to the house to loiter about there, in order to prevent the two men from suspecting any scheme or trick on foot. It was settled that when Mr. Hull (the ghost) was ready, he and James were to go a little way down the river under the shadow of the bank, then enter a piece of dark woods, and come up through the same, which led nearly to the back door of the house. Some persons might, perhaps, suppose that this projected trick of ours was a hazardous

undertaking, and liable to detection. But they must bear in mind that all the family had retired to rest, and that the subjects we had to deal with were two ignorant men, who had probably never seen a theatrical performance in their lives. Theatres were then few and far between in the United States, and these men had been living, most likely, all their lives in the interior of Pennsylvania. At any rate, their faces indicated an obtuseness of intellect sufficient for our purpose. Sam and Aleck sat down in the room smoking their cigars, and occasionally dropping a remark about ghosts, and goblins, and spectres, with a view to keep the attention of these men awake, lest they should go to sleep and thwart our plan. I walked in front outside, waiting for my cue to enter. By the time all was ready it was about ten o'clock. The two Dutchmen had taken numerous swigs at a bottle they brought from their boat, and smoked immensely; and their bed being ready, one had pulled off his pantaloons and lain down and fallen asleep. Just at that time I saw the *ghost* gliding stealthily along through the woods towards the back of the house. I thought it was about time for me to go in; so, placing myself near the front door, outside, waited for the signal from James. Presently the "cock crew," and I stepped into the room. The man who had not lain down was sitting on his bed, had pulled off one boot and was about to pull off the other, when, addressing myself to my two friends, I said, in a very serious manner: "Well, has this thing appeared again to-night?"

A. Drake — "I have seen nothing —"

S. Drake — "Horatio says it is but phantasy,
And will not let belief take hold of him
Touching this dreadful sight, twice seen of us;
Therefore I have entreated him along
With us to watch the minutes of this night;
That, if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes, and speak to it."

Ludlow — "Tush! Tush! 'twill not appear."

A. Drake — "Sit down awhile;
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we two nights have seen."

Ludlow — "Well, sit we down. [Taking a seat]
And let us hear *Bernardo* speak of this."

A. Drake — "Last night of all,
When yon same star, that's westward from the pole,
Had made his course to illumine that part of heaven
Whence now it burns, *Marcellus* and myself,
The clock then striking one —"

S. Drake — "Peace — break thee off — look where it comes again."

Enter the ghost — back door. Dutchman draws back on the bed. His hair rises on his head; his eyes stare and start

out, and he exclaims: "*Mein Gott! Was is das?*" Sam Drake starts up and makes for the opposite door. We follow, and all together block up the front door. Dutchman, with his eyes on the ghost, hands behind him, tries to awake his friend, who only grunts and groans. "Hans! Hans! Oh, Gott in Himmel! Hans, wache auf!" and he sat upon the side of the bed trembling like an aspen, the sweat rolling down his forehead in great drops. During which time Sam Drake was delivering the following words in the true *Hamlet* style, apparently overcome with awe:—

"Angels and ministers of grace defend us!
Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damned?
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell?
Be thy intents wicked or charitable?
Thou comest in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee.
Say—Why is this? Wherefore? What
Should we do?"

Here the ghost slowly motioned with his hand to follow him and began to move slowly and solemnly backward toward the door he came in. About the same time Hans had been waked up, and as we followed the ghost toward the back door, leaving the front entrance clear, Hans gathered up his clothes, and without stopping to put on any thing the two bolted out at the front door and ran toward their boat, as though the ghost, or something worse, was at their heels.

As soon as they were fairly out of sight we threw out the few things they had left, fastened the doors, and after enjoying our laugh, went to bed, and never heard more of the two Dutchmen. We were awakened just at peep of day by Tracy, according to instructions given the evening previous. Before our host retired we paid him for our room and cots, telling him we did not wish to arouse him as early as we should leave. We hurried down to the river. Tracy had made some coffee and boiled some eggs, so we took our breakfast into the boat, and ate it as we floated down.

As we were on the point of pushing out from the river bank, we observed the Dutch mule-merchants getting ready to start likewise. Whether they stopped to discuss with our host the appearance of the ghost of the previous night, I know not; but a few minutes after our departure we saw no more of them. During the early morning our progress was pleasant, but as the sun reached the meridian he poured his rays upon us with a lavish bounty that was almost overpowering. However, the manager was anxious to reach his point of destination, and we had no appeal. To say the truth, we were getting

quite willing to give up our "water excursion." The day dragged slowly away. "The weary sun had made a golden set." Yet no Pittsburg was to be seen. But the cry was still "onward!" About nine o'clock, however, to our great delight, the glimmerings of a city broke upon our view. There was "great joy in Askalon." In another half-hour we were tied to the shore of "Old Pitt," somewhere near, I think, to the spot from which the great bridge now crosses the Alleghany River; but no bridge was there then, that I remember. The boat being secured, the question then arose of how we were to dispose of ourselves for the night. It was decided that all who usually slept on the boat should remain on her till the morning, and the others,—that is, Sam, Aleck, and James Drake, Mr. Hull and myself, were to go into the city and take lodgings for the night, wherever most agreeable. This was quite satisfactory to us young fellows, who were anxious to see among what kind of people our lot had been cast.

It is well known to every one who has visited Pittsburg, even in its later and improved days, that, owing to the quantity of coals consumed in and about the city, there is scarcely a building but presents a sombre or almost black appearance. At the period of our arrival it was badly lighted at night, and where there was a light it served only to show what then appeared to us the "horrors of the place." Every house, inside as well as out, appeared begrimed with soot. Even the faces we saw had a shade of darkness, that gave them an appearance any thing rather than pleasant. All was hot and dirty, and I was half inclined to suspect that our "old gentleman" had conducted us to the domain of another "old gentleman" whose acquaintance I was very unwilling to make. In short, it seemed to me that we had been for the last seven days really on the river Styx, and that we had landed on that unknown shore "from whence no traveller returns;" and I expected at every corner to meet some monster with a cloven foot, tail, and horns.

We wandered around for half an hour, encountering several individuals bearing the human form, with eyes deep sunk in their heads, peering with fierce looks from beneath heavy black eyebrows, as much as to say, "What are *you* doing here?" At last we met a woman; then my heart was lighter. I stepped respectfully up to her, and inquired whether she could direct us to a hotel, or a public-house, where we could get lodging for the night. She smiled and said, "Yes, go on, yonder where you see that red light, to the Diamond, and you

will find a house of accommodation there ;” and away she walked. We stopped and pondered on her words : “ Red light — Diamond — house of accommodation.” We did not like the association of ideas arising from those short sentences. However, we concluded we would try it, and if any thing rough occurred, they would find it “ diamond cut diamond,” and so on we marched. On reaching the “ red light,” we found it was some colored liquid in a glass globe standing in the window of a druggist ; and on asking for the “ Diamond,” were told we were in it, it being a portion of the city known by that name. And we soon after found the “ house of accommodation ” to be a dark and dingy place, dignified with the name of “ hotel.” However, we were strangers to the city, and it was too late to look for a more inviting domicile. After making an arrangement with the landlord about our sleeping, which was to be in a large room containing two double and three single beds, we went down stairs to the bar-room, where some got drinks and others sat down and smoked. During the time we were smoking, James Drake had been out around the premises in the street, to discover what there was worth looking at. Among other things, he told us he had seen in a window near two of the largest watermelons he ever beheld, and wished his brother Sam to buy one. But Sam objected, saying it was not healthy to eat them at that late hour ; in which objection I supported him. Shortly afterwards James took a light, and said he would go to bed. When he was gone Sam said to Hull, Aleck, and myself, “ Let us go and try those melons ; I am not afraid of them, but I did not wish James to eat any at this late hour.” I told him that I would not eat any either ; that I never found watermelons to agree with my stomach. Aleck Drake thought, with me, that they were unhealthy. Hull said they never hurt him ; so he and Sam started after the watermelon. When they had been gone awhile, Aleck took a light and went up stairs to our room. In a few minutes after I followed him, and when I entered our room, found a young man about seventeen or eighteen years of age undressing, at a bed about six feet from mine. He and I had each a single bed. Aleck Drake was reading a newspaper he found there, and James was asleep. When I came into the room, which was a tolerably large one, Aleck did not observe me, or at least did not speak to me. I put my light out immediately, the young man did the same, and we both laid down. In a very few minutes Sam Drake and Hull came into the room. As soon as Aleck saw them (for he was yet awake) he said, in an undertone, “ Well, boys, what success ? ”

Hull replied, in a like subdued voice, as if fearful of awaking some one, yet loud enough for Aleck to hear him (who was deaf), "We finished them." Aleck said, "What! both of them?" Hull replied, "I know what's left of mine won't do any body any harm." Sam then spoke. "As for mine, any body's welcome to what's left of him." Aleck, with astonishment, "Why, you didn't finish one yourself?" Sam: "Well, so near there's no fun in it; I cut his *heart* out, and then left him." Just at this time I observed the man in the bed near me raise up his head a little and look at them, but they were just upon the point of putting their light out; they then got into bed, and the man laid down again. For half an hour he appeared to be very restless, turning in his bed often, and occasionally raising his head; but as soon as the others were asleep, which was evident from their regular and heavy breathing, he also went off into a sleep, and in a few minutes I followed his example. About one o'clock, as I suppose, I was awakened by the most unearthly noise I ever heard. At first, being only partially awake, I could not determine what it was; but being fully aroused, I found it to be my strange neighbor *snoring*. Great Heaven! such snoring I never heard before; it was more like the roaring of a bull. It seemed to me the whole house could not but hear it. It was agony to me. I always had a horror of snorers; but this man was worse than a snorer, he was a roarer. I determined I would do something to abate the nuisance. There was no sleep for me, if he remained in the room; so I set my wits to work for the ways and means to get rid of him.

After a few minutes' reflection, I arose, and going to his bed, with some difficulty succeeded in waking him; then, with suspended and broken speeches, and beckoning him to follow me, I got him out into a long passage that led to our bedroom. When there, I told him, with a look of alarm, that I did "not think we were safe in remaining in that room; I did not like the looks of those men who were there; I had heard them talking to one another since I went to bed, in undertones, in such language as made me think they were dangerous fellows." "Yes," he said, he had heard them make "remarks he didn't like;" and he asked me whether I had noticed that "black-looking fellow, and heard him say he had 'cut the heart out of him?'" I told him that I did, and that I had been awake ever since, fearful they would attempt to rob or murder one or both of us; and having watched till I was sure they were asleep, I had determined to leave the room, but I couldn't go without put-

ting him on his guard. He said he was greatly obliged to me ; and asked me what we had better do ? I told him we would first see whether we could procure the key of the door (which, by the by, I had noticed was in the door when I went to bed), and with it *lock them* in the room ; taking out first our bed-clothes, which we would make into pallets, and sleep on them in the passage. He thought it a good plan ; so I went at once and secured the key ; we then got our clothing and our bed-clothes, locked the door, I keeping the key, and down we both laid, each on his own pallet. It was not more than fifteen minutes after he was fairly down before he was soundly asleep, and “going it” again like a steam-engine. This was all I wanted. I got quietly up, took my things into the room again, locked him out, and slept soundly till sunrise. And when I say “sunrise,” I mean the time the sun *should* rise in Pittsburg, not the time it *does* rise ; for it seldom is seen in “Pitt” till it has been up from one to three hours in the surrounding country. It takes about that time for its rays to penetrate the dense cloud of smoke with which the morning atmosphere is charged ; and then it breaks through the cloud, as *Dennis Brulgruddery* says, “like a bright copper kettle in my kitchen,” and as sanguineous probably as the planet Mars would appear, were he to settle down upon our earth. I think it was about six o’clock when I awoke. I got up, waked my friends, told them briefly what had occurred, and hurried off down to our boat, leaving Sam Drake to settle for our lodgings and follow. Shortly after I reached the boat the others came there. They told me that my victim was still asleep in the hall when they passed down stairs. At breakfast I related our adventures of the night, and our whole company seemed to enjoy the joke. After breakfast I walked with Mr. Hull, who went to seek some conveyance down the Ohio River, which commences here, formed by the junction of the Alleghany and Monongahela Rivers. We passed through a number of streets on our way, that now, by daylight, presented a more encouraging appearance ; for, although the buildings had a dark and dingy aspect, yet there was a business look about them that spoke well for the industry and commerce of the place, even at that early day. The Drakes were particularly pleased with it ; the “old gentleman” said it put him in mind of Birmingham and Sheffield, England, his own country, and he felt quite at home.

Mr. Hull found a boat ready to start the afternoon of that same day ; it was what they termed in those times a “keel” boat, to distinguish it from a “flat” boat, or “broad-horn.”

They were generally about fifty feet in length, with a covered way, a kind of cabin occupying the entire hold of the boat, excepting spaces for small decks at each end, and a strip on each side the whole length of the boat, about fifteen inches wide, called the "run," on which the men walked when "poling" the boat up stream. I have been somewhat particular in describing this kind of boat, for the reason that it has a place in the memory of but few of the men of the present day. It was, however, a mode of conveyance much used on the waters of the great Western rivers in those early days, and one I may have occasion to speak of again in the progress of this journal. The "barges" recently brought into requisition as "tow-barges" bear some resemblance to the old keel-boat. Mr. Hull made a contract with the captain of this boat for a small sum, he finding his own provisions, to be landed, I think, at Marietta, a town on the Ohio River, about two hundred miles below Pittsburg. If I remember rightly, Mr. Hull informed me his father and family resided in or near that then thriving town. Having made his arrangements for departure, Mr. Hull walked with me to find the theatre, where we agreed to meet the Drakes. This, after some little time, we accomplished, — but such a theatre! It was the poorest apology for one I had then ever seen; I have, I confess, seen worse since. It was situated on the eastern outskirts of the city, and fronted, I think, on Fifth Street, not far from Wood Street. It had been built, I think, by some amateur in theatricals. It contained a pit and one tier of boxes, as they were called. The form was after the old style, — two parallel elongations, with an elliptical curve at the entrance. The decorations, if such they might be termed, were of the plainest kind, and every portion bore the Pittsburg stamp upon it, — *coal smut*. I confess I was not very pleasantly impressed with my first introduction into this city; where I afterwards found hosts of friends with hearts as warm as the furnaces that surround them, which add millions every year to their wealth and influence. Notwithstanding the uninviting appearance of the theatre, the prices of admission were higher than in the present day of finer theatres; and the auditors, generally, were numerous in proportion to the population. Pittsburg, I presume, did not contain in 1815 over five thousand inhabitants, perhaps not that number, but the people indulged more generally in rational amusements than they do now. The churches have multiplied, and asceticism has superinduced dyspepsia and hypochondria. Having taken a superficial view of this temple of the muses, we withdrew with our friend Mr. Hull, who

went to our boat to get his baggage and have it transferred to the keel-boat, on which he was about to embark. We saw him "safely bestowed," took a friendly leave of, and left him to float down the Ohio River and the "tide of time," and we never heard more of him. I must say I parted with this young gentleman with considerable regret. I never met a man of more even temper. He was, as *Hamlet* says, "e'en as just a man as e'er my conversation coped withal." "Give me the man who is not passion's slave, and I will wear him in my heart's core, — ay, in my heart of hearts."

CHAPTER V.

“Play-actors” in Bad Repute — Anxious for Work — Aleck Drake pays off an Old Score — August, 1815 — First Performance in Pittsburg — Novel Substitute for an Orchestra — Ludicrous Incident — “Pizarro” performed — Ingenious Devices — Unique “Virgins.”

ON the day of our arrival in Pittsburg we were informed by the manager that we were to make a theatrical season in that city, prior to commencing the regular circuit of the Kentucky theatres.

It was not the season of the year to begin at Frankfort, Kentucky, the first town he proposed to perform in, on entering his “promised land,” the best time there being when the State Legislature was in session; which, if I remember rightly, was to be early in December. In the meantime he and his company were looking up comfortable lodgings.

I had resolved, at the commencement of my dramatic career, to “keep myself to myself” as much as possible. I had seen enough of the profession, before entering it, to learn how ready its members were, when together, to talk of their profession, and elicit remarks from others, not in the profession, that often led to personalities and quarrels. I was willing to be responsible for any inconsiderate acts of my own, but was not willing to be dragged in by implication, to be answerable for the conduct of others. I had discovered that when an actor, or actress gave offence, the “outside world” were always ready to involve the whole fraternity, or at least all associated immediately with the offender, however clear of censure their conduct may have been. Under this conviction, I waited till most of the members of the company had located themselves, and then I sought and found lodgings for myself, at the house of a widow, who had only a few boarders, generally young clerks of the city. I was an inmate of her house for a week before she knew what my occupation was; and after I had been there a month she told me candidly that, had she known I was a “play actor,” she would not have allowed me to become a boarder in her house; but, continuing, said, “You have behaved so much like a gentleman that I would be glad to have you remain.”

A greater number of performers were necessary, to prosecute

a season to advantage, than Drake then had with him. The number with him were inadequate to carry through a season of three months (the time proposed to fill out here) without overworking, if not entirely breaking them down. When he started from Albany he did not expect to reach Pittsburg as soon as he did by a month; but the towns of Western New York were then, most of them, too small to support even the limited number of performers he had with him. With the few he had, he thought he might make out a season of four or five weeks, then push on to Kentucky, where he was assured there were several actors waiting his arrival. The deceased Noble Luke Usher had engaged some professionals while in the East, who reached Kentucky before they learned of his death; and having been told by the uncle of Mr. Usher that Mr. Drake was negotiating for the theatres, they concluded to remain until the result was known, and in the event of Mr. Drake's coming to Kentucky, to endeavor to get engagements with him. In this they were not disappointed, as the result will show. These were the persons with whom he proposed to strengthen his company for the Kentucky campaign.

Time was beginning to drag heavily along with the young portion of the company. As for me, "my soul was in arms, and eager for the fray." Every day seemed like a week to me, I was so anxious to be at work in the profession of my choice, one that had been my thought by day and my dream by night for years, although until recently I had despaired of ever having my desires gratified. Pittsburg had then no place or places of rational amusement open to the public, and men therefore congregated in beer-cellars, in eating-houses, gambling-houses, and other "houses," to while away an evening. One night, during our idle period, Aleck Drake and I walked out together after supper, thinking we would take a stroll through the city, just to see what we could see. We walked for some time, and found very little, or nothing, to interest us. When passing by a beer-cellar, we heard some man with a very good voice singing, "Willie Brewed a Peck o' Maut." Aleck at once said, "Let us go in and hear this man sing." I have always been exceedingly fond of music, and Scotch and Irish songs have been my special favorites. So down into the cellar we went. Of course, the first requisite to a seat there was to call for some beer. I had previously informed my friend that I had no money in my pockets; in fact, he knew that without any information from me. He was well aware that the "old gentleman" was "purse-bearer," and that we had all been placed under strict requirements of economy.

But, however, Aleck said, "I'll make it all right, my boy." So, with an air of some considerable consequence, he called for a "bottle of beer." It was the custom then and there to serve you with beer in bottles, with glasses out of which to drink it, and not to draw it into glass mugs, after the present German fashion. The beer was fine, as all Pittsburg beer has been and is. The Scotsman, for such he was, then sang "John Anderson, my Jo-John," and I do not think I ever heard a better uncultivated voice. It was clear and firm, and he had such complete control of it that he could produce some of the sweetest tones I ever heard. We were delighted, and enjoyed his singing greatly. Aleck, though troubled very much at times to hear words *spoken* to him, declared he could always hear the softest strain of *music*. It was, I think, a peculiarity I never met with in any one else. The bottle of beer soon disappeared, and Aleck called for two more, and invited the Scotsman and his two friends to join us in drinking it. They accepted the invitation, and the singer then gave us "Auld Robin Gray," which was given with more expression and effect even than the previous songs. They made a request that Aleck would sing, which, after some excuses, he complied with, and gave them the "Curly-headed Plough-boy," a song somewhat popular in those days. They expressed themselves highly delighted, and the Scotsman said to Aleck, in his native dialect, "By my sol, sir, an' you were to go upon the stage as an actor, mon, you'd mak your fortin," which Aleck and I enjoyed hugely, the others joining in our mirth without understanding the point of the joke. After some more singing, and the cracking of a few hard witticisms, we found it was near eleven o'clock, and we began to think of leaving. Aleck suddenly said to the party, "Excuse me," and walked toward the front part of the cellar. As the proprietor of the establishment was seated there, behind a small desk, I supposed Aleck was going to pay him our bill; but to my great surprise I saw him go up the steps and disappear, and then a conviction flashed across my mind that I was "sold." However, I kept a steady face, and did not divulge my thoughts. For appearance sake I waited five or more minutes, when I excused myself to the party, and bid them good-night. But now came the "hard rub." I saw clearly I had to foot the beer-score. So putting a bold face on the matter, I said to the landlord, "Did that gentleman who last went out settle our bill?" To which he replied in a pleasant way, with a slight Irish accent, "No, sir." I said that was very strange. "Did he say he would come back and pay it?" "No, sir," said the host. I

was considerably puzzled what to do. However, in a few moments I decided that the old maxim was a good one, that "truth is always safest." So I said to "mine host," "I regret, sir, exceedingly, this conduct of my friend, who knew when I entered your premises with him that I had no money in my pockets, and this is a trick of his to place me in a dilemma, knowing me to be a stranger in this city." I had scarcely finished my sentence when, in his bland and good-natured manner, he said, "I beg, sir, you will not disturb yourself about the trifle. It's of no consequence. You can call at any other time and pay it; 'twill be all the same." I thanked him for his courtesy, and assured him it would be paid the coming day. I went to bed that night in no very pleasant humor. The next day I had just got through breakfast, and was occupied in my room, when I walked my friend Aleck. As soon as he saw me he burst into a loud laugh, and asked me how I liked the "howling of the wolf." Seeing I was not in the best possible humor, he said, "Come now, don't put a serious face upon the matter. You know, my boy, I told you I would pay you, and now I am satisfied." "Satisfied!" said I. "Yes, you may be, but I am not; I'm a regular Corsican in my nature, and I'll have my revenge if it takes me an age to accomplish it. I believe in the *lex talionis*, "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." At which he laughed again, and said, "Come, put on your hat, and let us walk to that beer-cellar, where I will explain everything to the man and make it all right." I told him he couldn't make it "all right;" that he had exposed me before a third party in this trick, and I had not done with him yet. However, we walked off together to the man, where he repeated to the jolly host the trick that I played off upon him, and which led to his conduct of the previous night. Our good-natured friend seemed to enjoy the jest, and insisted upon our sitting down and drinking a bottle of beer with him. I was opposed to drinking any kind of liquor in the morning, even beer; but to put the best face I could upon the matter, I joined them in one glass. I found our host a first-rate, jovial man, with a large share of native Irish wit and good humor. I was not fond of drinking beer, and do not remember that I visited his place of resort after that morning during the season we then made in Pittsburg. But I recollect that on the occasion of my making a season in the same city as a manager of theatricals, about ten years later, of becoming acquainted with an Irish gentleman of the name of Holmes,—then, I think, familiarly called "Natty Holmes,"—engaged in the beer business on a large scale,

whom I have always supposed to be the same man, with the good-looking face and *bonhomie* manner that so favorably impressed me in 1815.

In about a week after our arrival a Mr. Williams, *alias* Wilson, came from Philadelphia, bringing with him two young men, aspirants for histrionic fame; they were simply novices. Mr. W. said he had engaged a Mr. Bland, from the London theatres, who would be over in a few days with us, and who was a good actor, especially as an operatic performer. These three men, with Mrs. Riddle, were the only persons Mr. W. had succeeded in securing towards the Pittsburg "company."

On a Saturday evening about the middle of August, 1815, Mr. Samuel Drake, Sr., commenced a theatrical season in the smoky city of Pittsburg. This, I believe, was the first attempt at any regular, protracted season that had been made in that city. There had been some performances for a limited number of nights by different strollers, assisted by such amateurs as were there to be found, anxious to display their extraordinary abilities. It could not be said the Drama commenced its reign there till this season of Mr. Drake's. Saturday was selected by the manager for the opening night, as it was the most convenient one for most of the population of the city, a large proportion of which were mechanics. The opening pieces were Tobin's comedy of the "Honeymoon," after which was performed an English comic opera called "No Song, no Supper."

The principal characters of the comedy were cast as follows: *Duke Aranza*, Mr. Williams; *Rolando*, Mr. S. Drake; *Count Montalban*, Mr. Ludlow; *Balthazer*, Mr. Drake, Sr.; *Mock Duke*, Mr. A. Drake. I do not remember who filled the other male characters. *Juliana*, Mrs. Williams; *Volante*, Miss Denny; *Zamora*, Mrs. Riddle; *Hostess*, Mrs. Lewis. The characters of the afterpiece were cast as follows: *Crop*, Mr. Drake, Sr.; *Robin*, Mr. S. Drake; *Endless*, Mr. A. Drake; *Frederick*, Mr. Ludlow; *Margaretta*, Mrs. Lewis; *Dorothy*, Miss Martha Drake. Both play and farce were received with entire satisfaction by the public. In the last scene of the afterpiece, where the lawyer is taken out of the farmer's sack covered with flour, the pit and second tier, crowded to excess, fairly screamed and shouted. In short, the opening was a complete success. On the morning following, the newspapers (I believe there were only two published there then) gave the company the most unqualified praise; and congratulated the citizens on the prospect of a sound and innocent source of

amusement, in which the most scrupulous might indulge to advantage.

Our second night's performance was a tragedy, entitled, "Adelgitha; or the Fruits of a Single Error;" followed by the comic opera of the "Quaker." In this comic opera, Miss Denny being cast for a singing character, was expected to sing; and as this had been one of our itinerant pieces, S. Drake had been making desperate efforts to teach her the first song of the character,—

"A kernel from an apple core,
One day on either cheek I wore,"

and he had succeeded so far that she had been induced to attempt the singing of it on two or three occasions prior to our reaching Pittsburg; but when the piece was put up for our second night, she went to the manager with tears in her eyes, to beg him to allow her to leave out that song. This was to me an evidence of that good sense with which I generally found her endowed; for, although possessing a firm and clear voice in speaking, yet in singing it was inflexible and unmusical; and she generally contrived to get into two or three keys different from the one she started on. This gave the public more *variety*, 'tis true, but less pleasure. Any person who has seen that lady, as Mrs. A. Drake, in the heyday of her career, in her various performances, will be pleased that Miss Denny did not succeed as a vocalist, or perhaps they otherwise would never have had the pleasure of witnessing her enactment of *Evadne*, *Mrs. Haller*, *Widow Cheerly*, *Lady Teazle*, and other like characters.

There was something ludicrous, usually, connected with the performance of this comic opera in Mr. Drake's company, during the first few months that I was with him, but the finishing touch to it occurred at our first performance of it in Pittsburg. Mr. Drake had got together as efficient an orchestra as the city would afford; and although some of them were very capable musicians, there was no man to be found who could lead an opera, it demanding a peculiar faculty, only to be acquired by practice. So Sam Drake had to officiate as "leader," when any singing was done on the stage. But in this comic opera he was compelled to appear as an actor, no other member of the company being ready in the character of *Lubin*; and the piece was one in which Mr. Drake, Sr., appeared to advantage; besides, it was well done otherwise. The old gentleman placed no small value on his performance of *Steady*,

the "Quaker." In truth, he had a very good barytone voice, and for this kind of voice the music of the part was designed.

The manager had designed this comic opera to be one of his stock pieces. In order to have it go smoothly in the company by the time he reached Kentucky, he had got up and performed it as often as he conveniently could in the small towns we passed through in the progress of our journey. Of course, we could not in those days pick up an orchestra and operatic leader in such places; so the only accompaniment each singer had was *one violin*, played by Sam Drake behind the scenes, at such times as he was not on the stage performing. In the latter case his brother, Aleck Drake, officiated as leader and orchestra. *Lubin*, in the "Quaker," is the leading, tenor part. In the latter portion of the first act there is a piece of music requiring the voices of the principal characters, who are all on the stage at one time; but *Lubin* should be at the back of it, listening to what the others are singing, occasionally coming in with his voice among others, but finally has a solo, and exits leaving the others on the stage. Now, it would not have been very proper for him to take the violin with him on the stage, and to have accompanied himself, and others. So, instead of being on the stage bodily, he stood behind the "wing," or side scene, and played the violin, only turning his head and thrusting it on when his own voice was required; at the same time holding the violin on one side, out of sight, but still playing on the instrument. This worked very well, except when the time came, as on this occasion, for his solo and exit; the latter his sweetheart, *Gillian*, has to see and speak of. To meet this difficulty he used to hand the violin to some one behind the scenes, and rush across the back of the stage just as he was finishing the last few words. The bobbing on and off of his head, every few minutes, was a source of fun for all of us. But here in Pittsburg, the second night of the season, when all were anxious to deepen the favorable impression of the first night's performance, the most ludicrous event occurred that I ever witnessed on the stage.

In 1815 there were very few, if any theatres in which the scenery was moved by machinery, as is now done; it was generally handled by men called "scene-shifters." Those in Pittsburg that our manager was compelled to employ were all inexperienced persons, excepting Mr. Lewis, who travelled with us, and was the head man. It is customary for the scene-shifters to make their movements in accordance with a

written paper conveniently placed for them, called a "scene-plot," or plat, furnished by the prompter of the theatre, and at a signal given by that officer. In some instances, however, mistakes occur in the change of scenes, from having "green hands." Such was the case on this occasion of our performance of the "Quaker." Sam Drake had, as usual, placed himself behind the second wing, near the inner edge, so as to show his head and sing his line at the proper time. He had sung his solo, and wished some one to take the violin, that he might make his way across the stage according to the business of the scene, and knowing there was a man standing near him, thrust his violin out behind him, saying at the same time, "Quick, quick!" This man, a "green hand," supposing that he wished the next scene shoved on the stage "quick," did not wait for the usual signal, but thrust the scene on rapidly, and with great force, striking Sam on the back, and knocking him and his violin into the middle of the stage, in full view of the audience. Great was the surprise of every one on the stage. Sam picked up his violin and himself, and scampered off as quickly as possible. The audience did not understand it. Sam was instantly ready, violin in hand, on the opposite side, and the manager said to *Gillian* in a subdued tone, "Go on with your line." She began with the words, which were: "He's gone; now, Lord, Lord, I'm so mad I could cry." But the scene was too much for her; instead of crying, she burst into a most immoderate fit of laughter, in which all behind the scenes joined; even *Steady*, the Quaker, had to shake his fat sides. The audience then began to "smell the joke," and then *they* joined in the laugh. The manager was obliged to direct the curtain to be dropped in order to restore order again.

Our third night's performance was Sheridan's romantic play entitled "Pizzarro," or the "Virgins of the Sun." Williams aspired to tragedy, and fancied he could enact *Rolla* better than any man on this side of the Atlantic, and was very urgent that this play should be produced. Mr. Drake was opposed to attempting it, owing to the many difficulties that lay in the way of producing it properly, but Williams was persistent, and Mr. Drake finally agreed to try it in the best way he could do under the circumstances. The first difficulty taken in hand was the scenery. A Temple of the Sun, entirely new, had to be gotten up and painted. There was no scene-painter in the city, that could then be found; but Mr. Drake had, in his strolling days in England, occasionally flourished the paint-brush, and essayed the work again in order to put the piece through. In

a few days the old gentleman had produced a tolerably fair Temple of the Sun, and before rehearsal one morning was giving some extra touches to the grand central luminary, which, when covered with gold-foil and frosting, and lighted up, looked as brilliant and dazzling as the head-light of a locomotive. At this juncture Mr. Drake's eldest son, Samuel, came into the theatre, and taking a position just behind the orchestra, and gazing for a few minutes on the great symbol of Peruvian worship, said to the old gentleman, who was standing on the stage, scanning his work with an artistic eye, "Father, that is the worst *sun* you ever made." The old man as quick as thought replied, "I beg your pardon, sir; I made a much worse one when I made you." A jolly laugh went out among the company standing around, in which Sam joined as heartily as the rest.

The next difficulty that presented itself was a lack of virgins. Virgins (of course I mean stage virgins) were not to be had in Pittsburg in those days. Seamstresses and shoebinders would have as soon thought of walking deliberately into Pandemonium as to have appeared on the stage as "supers," or "corps de ballet."

The company was very limited in regard to females, and what was the use of a Temple of the Sun without "Virgins of the Sun" as worshippers; and what would become of that beautiful chant of "Oh, Power Supreme! in mercy smile." No, we must have virgins, — but where to get them. Williams undertook to get over the difficulty, and to furnish virgins.

In about two weeks, it having been duly announced in the meantime — "Pizarro, or the Death of Peruvian Rolla," was produced on a Saturday night early in September.

The house was filled to its utmost extent, — full four hundred persons, — at a dollar a ticket all through, except for children; the pit was crowded with foundrymen, keel-boat men, and sundry and divers dark-featured and iron-fisted burghers, the boxes being filled with dark-skinned yet beautiful ladies.

The five leading characters of the play were cast as follows: *Rolla*, the Peruvian General, Alex. Williams; *Pizarro*, the Spanish General, Sam Drake, Jr.; *Alonzo*, a Spanish officer of rank, the beloved husband of *Cora*, a back-sliding Virgin of the Sun, N. M. Ludlow; *Elvira*, Mrs. Lewis, who performed the heavy tragedy ladies and the first old woman; *Cora*, Miss Fanny Denny, afterwards very popular in the West as Mrs. A. Drake. Well, the curtain bell was rung promptly on time, and up went the curtain, displaying to the eyes of the aston-

ished little boys a magnificent tent scene (by Drake), the material represented being much like our modern striped street-awnings, but of course differently arranged.

The tent was guarded by six Spanish soldiers in full armor, — of leather and buttons, — but the armor did not exactly fit the soldiers, who were six half-grown lads. The helmets were too large, and fell down over their eyes. This was a convenience to the lads, who were ashamed of being seen in such company.

The leather armor, too, lacked a filling out, having been made for full-sized men, and as presented there in motionless terror, looked as though it had been hung on stakes to be aired. But I will state just here, in behalf of the Peruvian army, that it presented a most formidable appearance of six well-grown young men. By-the-by, I would like to mention here, *en passant*, that the leader of these six young men is now a wealthy business-man of Pittsburg, a Mr. H——, president of a bank there. But let that pass without further comment; it may be he is none the worse for being a bank-president.

The first act of Pizarro went off with considerable eclat, but when the Temple of the Sun (also by Drake) was presented to the bedazzled eyes of the audience, the applause was immense. When this had subsided the *band* (one violin behind the scenes, played by *Pizarro*, in full armor) struck up a grand march, and the Peruvian army (of six men) marched on in grand style, headed by the future bank-president, and took their proper position to listen to the celebrated address of *Rolla* to the Peruvian army, beginning with, “My brave associates! partners of my toils, my feelings, and my fame!” — the bank-president here assuming that martial appearance for which he ever afterwards was famous.

When *Rolla's* address had been concluded, the band (*Pizarro*, as before) commenced a slow, solemn piece of music, to which the Virgins of the Sun were to enter on the stage with silent reverences, to begin their worship of the sun. They made their appearance, first entrance, right and left hand, one from each side; met in front at the centre of the stage; then side by side passed up, bowed a reverent salutation to the god of day; and then took their positions to the right and left sides, and commenced the beautiful chant of “Oh, Power Supreme.” The first pair of virgins, provided by Mr. Williams, were the *Elvira* of the night, Mrs. Lewis, and *Cora*, Miss Denny, with long white robes and veils to disguise them. The next pair of virgins were two daughters of Mr. Drake, Miss Julia, then about fourteen years of age, and her sister Martha, about thirty. The third pair of virgins were an old Irishwoman,

who cleaned the dressing-rooms, and the "property-man," a Pennsylvania Dutchman, whose business it was to provide all small articles of furniture required for the stage. As the old song goes, "Sure such a pair was never seen."

A description of these virgins is worthy of record, in order that the present generation of play-goers may know to what shifts the pioneers of the Western drama had to resort, in order to succeed with their business. Their costumes consisted of long white cotton gowns reaching to the ankles, and closed in front; around the waist a red sash; suspended from the neck, on the breast, a large golden sun; over the head and ears, and reaching to the shoulders, a white cloth or *bandeau*; over this a short white gauze veil reaching below the chin, in order, in this case, to conceal the features. The property official was a short, stout man, with a low forehead, a pug nose, and in no small degree corpulent. The old house-cleaner was not able to make as prominent an appearance, in the same way, as did her companion; yet when she walked up the stage there was a *stern* reality exhibited by her, that made her quite as conspicuous in the public eye as her companion in piety. While this ceremony of entering and doing reverence to the sun was proceeding, there was a silence such as should always exist during any devotional service, Christian or Pagan; but when the last-mentioned pair of virgins entered, bowed, and were walking up the stage, there was heard to arise from the centre of the pit a long and pious groan, and a voice, partially subdued, but loud enough to be heard in the prevailing silence, "Oh, such virgins!" The effect was not unlike that of dropping a lighted match into a canister of gunpowder, — the explosion was tremendous. The pit shouted and the house roared with laughter, in which the actors were compelled to join.

As soon as he could be heard, the manager, Mr. Drake, Sr., who was at the time standing in front of the altar, as the high priest of the sun, stepped to the front of the stage, and addressing himself to the audience generally, said: "Ladies and gentlemen, I am astonished and mortified to find in this enlightened city an individual so lost to decorum, not to say to decency, as to be capable of insulting such a collection of respectable citizens, by insulting a company of comedians who have travelled hundreds of miles to contribute to their pleasure." This had the desired effect, and elicited a full round of applause for the manager; who then, addressing the supposed individual offender seated in the centre of the pit, said: —

"Sir, as you cannot but perceive that such expressions as you have used, or any such interruptions, must be offensive to

your fellow-citizens, I trust you will not repeat the offence, but remain a quiet spectator, if not a gratified one." To this the offender, in a stentorian voice, responded, "Yes, sir;" when a shout went up from the pit, and the performance went on.

It was ascertained a few days after that the person who had caused this interruption was a well-known keel-boat captain, notorious for an independent expression of his feelings on all occasions, but as good-hearted a fellow as ever lived; and as he was long and favorably known in after years as one of our most efficient and honorable steamboat captains on the Mississippi River, I feel no hesitation in here recording his name as Capt. Alex. Scott.

CHAPTER VI.

Mr. Bland suddenly disappears — The Author sticks on the Stage — Is prompted by a Lady in a Stage-box — Advice to Managers and Actors — Season at Pittsburg terminates — Company descend the Ohio River — Limestone — Specimen of Kentucky Wit — Kentucky Men and Women.

THE success I met with in my first two weeks in a regular theatre, and in a city of no small consequence even at that early day, gave me great hopes that I might ultimately become an actor of some notoriety. In thought, I saw a realization of my youthful day-dreams. The manager was obliged, owing to the limited number of his company, to give me characters of importance to play, quite beyond my inexperience to do justice to. When the season was over, and we had left the city, he candidly confessed to me he had often given me so much to do that he feared I would break down, and not be able to carry it through. But my ambition was great, and I labored hard to gratify its cravings. I shall always retain a grateful remembrance of Pittsburg, as my professional *alma mater*; for to the fostering care, by the people of that city, of my youthful efforts I feel I am indebted for success in that, the first campaign of my professional career. Indeed, for many years after, I always found a kind and hearty welcome among them, and never visited the city that I did not leave it with reluctance.

Mr. Drake was considerably embarrassed by lack of a full and properly adjusted company. The reinforcements promised by Mr. Williams dwindled, in fact, to the addition only of Mrs. Riddle, before mentioned, and two novices, with the exception of an English actor named Bland, who arrived after we had reached the second week of our season. As this gentleman was one of some notoriety in his own country, and one possessing no small share of professional ability, an episodic reference to him will perhaps not be out of place here: This Mr. Bland was the brother of the celebrated Mrs. Jordan, the mistress of the Duke of Clarence, son of George III. of England, and who, after the death of his brother, George IV., ascended the throne. Mrs. Jordan should have been the legalized mother of the children she bore by this royal rake, and who were known as the "Fitz-Clarences." She died in

poverty, neglected by her royal destroyer. I cannot recollect his christian name, but he was the husband of the Mrs. Bland, formerly Miss Romanzini, somewhat celebrated as a ballad and comic opera singer in London about the beginning of the present century. She left him, one day, and went off with another man. That individual soon deserted her, and came to America. Mr. Bland, after learning that he was in the United States, followed him, as 'twas supposed, to enforce a summary process of revenge; but before Bland reached America the despoiler of his domestic happiness died. Mr. Bland was a very silent, reserved, and eccentric individual, and seldom spoke to any one more than was absolutely necessary. He preferred to open in Pittsburg in an operatic character. The only opera ready at the time, in which Mr. Bland performed, was the "Quaker," which had already just been played. However, it had to be that, or Mr. Bland would have to wait a week or so, until another could be got ready. He was unwilling to delay his opening, so he appeared in *Lubin*, in the "Quaker." My recollection of Mr. Bland is that of an actor who had seen better days, and possessed at some previous time greater vocal powers than he then manifested; still he sang the music correctly, and with some considerable expression, but did not *look* the part as well as Sam Drake. The audience received him courteously, and the opera gave satisfaction.

A few evenings later we performed the romantic play of the "Castle Spectre." From necessity, as I then believed, I was cast for a character in this play the very last I would have supposed the manager could have thought of assigning to me: it was *Father Philip*, a fat old friar. I will just ask the reader to imagine the feelings of a young man of twenty years, who valued himself not a little on his figure and personal appearance, being required to put on a bald-pated wig, a Falstaffian paunch, and mark his face with the wrinkles of age, and then to consider my feelings. In vain did I respectfully remonstrate with the manager; he told me that one of his reasons for casting me to that character was that he might ascertain "in what line of acting my best capacity and ability might lie." "He thought I had great *versatility*;" "this was merely a trial." "He did not propose to continue me in the *role* of old men." I quietly gave myself up as a martyr, partly as a return for what I then supposed a compliment, and partly because I did not desire to oppose the will of the management, and risk the possibility of a discharge from the theatre. The result of the "trial" was that I got more ap-

plause on that occasion than had ever before been bestowed upon me for any one character; and when I had just made an exit, after putting the house into a roar of laughter, I was met by the manager, Mr. Drake, with, "There, sir, what do you think now; was I not right in putting you into *Father Philip*?" But let me tell my readers a secret, which did not present itself to my mind then: the *author* had made the part funny; it was not my *acting*, and 'twas he who was entitled to the applause. But young aspirants for histrionic honors are ever willing to accept for themselves all the applause an audience may please to bestow. I have at times thought it was strange the manager, Mr. Drake, did not himself enact the part of *Father Philip*, and cast me for *Earl Reginald*, the part he played in this piece. He would have performed my part well, and I would have looked his better than he could, inasmuch as the *Earl* has been imprisoned and starved till he was but little more than a skeleton; and it was certainly easier to bring my light figure to such a resemblance than it was to reduce our corpulent commander. Mr. Drake's weight was but little less than one hundred and eighty pounds, while mine then was only about one hundred and forty. I suppose, though, the reason was he had played one, and could not conveniently study the other, his managerial duties occupying nearly all his time. The character of *Earl Osmond* was performed by Mr. Williams; *Angela* by Miss Denny, who did herself great credit, as a novice, in the personation of this character; *Dame Alice* was performed by Mrs. Lewis; the *Spectre* by Miss Martha Drake. In that play Mr. Bland was asked to perform the character of *Hassan*, a Moor. He did not object to it, and rehearsed the part in the morning of play-day; but when it was time for the curtain to rise for the performance, Mr. Bland was not to be found. He had disappeared from his lodgings, taking with him his wardrobe (which would not have broken the back of a camel), and he had wandered away no man knew whither. His character in the piece of that night was filled by Sam Drake, who went on for it at that short notice, and got through without distressing any of the company. I will say here, in conclusion, with regard to Bland, I never heard of or saw him until about three years after, as I was riding through the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations of Indians, who then occupied country east of the Mississippi River. Many years after this a gentleman told me he had met Bland among the Indians within a few years of the time he was speaking with me, and that Bland had been teaching school among them; that some half-breed Indian,

a leading one among the tribe, had engaged Bland to instruct his children in reading and writing, with other branches of an English education; and he thought he had recently heard of Bland's death among them.

Not many nights after the disappearance of Mr. Bland, I was required by the management to try my vocal abilities on the stage. It was supposed I had voice enough to get through with two or three operatic characters, in a small way; and therefore I was cast for the character of *Inkle*, in a popular comic opera of that day, written by George Colmar, and entitled, "*Inkle and Yarico*." On the same evening I had to enact *Sir Abel Handy* (another comic old man), in the comedy of "*Speed the Plough*."

Here was a jump for a young actor! The reader may perhaps remember my attempt in this play at Albany, prior to my enlistment under the dramatic banner, as the servant of *Bob Handy*, when Mr. Burke enacted *Sir Abel Handy*, and that Mr. Burke made some flattering remarks on the occasion. This seemed almost a fulfilment of that gentleman's prognostication. Six months had hardly transpired, when I was called upon to fill the very character he was then performing. Do not imagine, gentle reader, that I supposed myself equal to the task. I viewed the matter as it really was, — one of necessity on the part of the management, — and I resolved to do the best I was capable of, to help the cause. Two such characters, on the same night, as *Sir Abel Handy* and *Inkle*, both for the first time, and a first attempt to sing in public, was a trial pretty severe on the capacity and nerve of a novice. However, I got through with it in a passable manner, until we came to the *finale*. In that I had a verse to sing, the music lively and spirited; and although at rehearsal I had gone through it well enough, yet, from a momentary abstraction, I lost the connection of the words, and came to a dead halt. A short pause, and Sam Drake, who was leading the orchestra, began again the symphony. I made a fresh start on the verse, but came to a stand-still at the same point again. Sam gave me "the word" from the orchestra. It was no go. Mr. Drake, Sr., who was on the stage as *Sir Christopher Curry*, gave "the word." I was confused, and could not hear what he said; and last of all, a lady from the stage-box gave me "the word." That finished me. I recognized the lady as one I had been introduced to in the morning of the same day. So down went the curtain, and the performance concluded for the night. That lady was one well known in the profession in those days as Mrs. Barrett, the mother of George Barrett, at

times complimented with the sobriquet of "Gentleman George." Mrs. Barrett was on her way East from Cincinnati, where she had been performing in a small company under the control of William Turner; but, finding the company poor and inadequately supported, she concluded to return to her former comfortable home and position in Messrs. Wood & Warren's theatre at Philadelphia, where she was known and highly esteemed. In a conversation with Mrs. Barrett, the next day following my mishap in *Inkle*, I learned that in her early stage career she had performed the character of *Yarico*, and was quite familiar with most of the language of the entire opera, and happened to remember the lines of *Inkle* in the verse of the *finale* which had proved so disastrous to me. She told me that she was so much excited by my embarrassment that giving me "the word" was an impulse of the moment, regardless of the peculiar situation in which she was placed.

And now, just here, I will crave of my readers the privilege to philosophize a little, and comment on the conduct of some of my professional brethren. Although I have not a word of reproach to cast upon the memory of my worthy old manager, Samuel Drake, Sr., who was always kind, and did the best for me that circumstances would allow, yet I must censure a course too often pursued by managers, in loading down a young actor with study, falsely so called; for it is nothing more than committing to memory a mountain of words, the meaning of which he has neither time to consider or digest. He is hurried on from part to part, from night to night, and season to season, through a course of years; and ends at last a careless, slouchy, stupid mumbler of sentences, the substance of which he neither knows nor cares to know. If this evil were confined to a few isolated cases it would hardly be worth while to mention it, but it has become almost universal of late years. It pervades the metropolitan corps of actors, with few exceptions, as entirely as the country travelling troupes. Now, the principal cause of this great evil I consider to be nothing less than the universal extension of the "starring system!" It is to be deplored that it was ever introduced into this or any other country.

Mr. William Dunlap tells us, in his "History of the American Theatre" (page 326), that Mr. Thomas A. Cooper, on his second visit to the United States from his native land (England), in November, 1806, played twelve nights in New York to very full houses, the gross receipts for the twelve nights being \$9,936, which were followed by two additional

nights that yielded in gross only \$998. Here we have, I believe, about the first instance on record of regular "star-ring" in the United States; and I suspect we have cause to attribute to Mr. Cooper the introduction on this side of the Atlantic of the pernicious curse on the drama called star.

In making this sweeping denunciation, I wish to be distinctly understood. I have no personal animosity against any "star," living or dead. My connection with such, while I was in the profession, were generally of a pleasant nature. But as a *system*, perverted from its original *rank* and *dignity*, and lowered and familiarized by brainless fatuity in the introduction before the public of extravagant improbabilities on the one hand, and licentiousness and vulgarity on the other, "star-ring" has become a curse on the profession and a nuisance to the public. Of course there are, even in these degenerate days of 1880, a few honorable exceptions among these "star-ers."

In my opinion, — and I expect the reader to put his own estimate on that opinion, — the "stage" in this country, in the essentials of genius and talent, has sadly degenerated since the palmy days of Thomas A. Cooper, George Frederick Cooke, and Kean and Booth the seniors. I have no doubt I shall be voted "an old foggy" by many of the profession of to-day, but that does not appear to me any reason why I should not express my opinion. This paucity of brains, and the illegitimate use of brains, is not the only cause of the decline in the material of the Drama. It has, as I have before stated, arisen out of a universal and promiscuous appearance of two-penny candles and farthing rush-lights as "stars." These "lesser luminaries" flit around on the dramatic horizon, dragging in their train a fire-fly or two, that emits a secondary twinkle, pretty much of the same kind as that of a certain fungus on a log, showing its rottenness, and giving just light enough to mislead one.

During the remaining portion of the season at Pittsburg, which terminated about the 10th of November, very little transpired worthy of notice in this narrative, unless it might be the occurrence of my first theatrical "benefit." The management allowed me to select my own pieces for that night's performance, and I indulged my ambition by choosing for the principal one a comedy, entitled, "The Way to get Married," that I might have an opportunity to try myself in what I have always had a "vaunting ambition" for, — genteel comedy. I recollect having seen that comedy performed at the old Park Theatre, in the city of New York, some time, I think, in the

year 1810, on an occasion when Mr. William Wood, manager of the theatre in Philadelphia, and Mr. Jefferson, of the same, came to New York as "stars." Yes, "*stars!*" They were "*STARS!*" The first appeared in the character of *Tangent*, and was the perfect embodiment of the elegant and spirited gentleman. I became so fascinated with the character I could not sleep much the night I witnessed it. It had taken such possession of my mind that I could, the next day, remember a large portion of the words of the character, merely from having heard Mr. Wood repeat them on that one occasion. And as to Mr. Jefferson (the grandfather of our present popular comedian of that name), his exquisite humor and the drollery of his face I shall never forget; they are as fresh in my mind as though I had witnessed them only a week ago, and sixty years have winged their way since that time.

My "benefit" was well attended, and was considered by the company quite commendatory, being conferred as it was on a "novice." I got through the character of *Tangent*, I presume, respectably (having Mr. Wood fresh in my memory), for I was honored with more applause than was bestowed on me at any time before; and, had the event occurred in later years, I suppose I should have been called before the curtain, but in those days such compliments—"more honored in the breach than the observance"—were not so hackneyed as at the present time.

The season terminated with the "benefit" of the manager, Mr. Drake, Sr., who took for his first piece a play called "Fraternal Discord," altered and adapted from Kotzebue's "Bruder's Twist." It was frequently performed in those days. There was an English translation by Thomas Dibdin, of London, but I believe the American play had the preference, even in Great Britain. The characters of *Captain Bertram* and *Jack Junk*, an old sea-captain and his boatswain, were pretty much an entire creation of Mr. William Dunlap, and was first produced when the author was manager of the Park Theatre, New York, some time in November, A. D. 1800. The two prominent characters were well performed by Mr. Drake and his son Alexander, while the part of *Ma'am Moral* was equally well done by Mrs. Lewis. The afterpiece on the occasion was "the Prize, or 2, 5, 3, 8," Mr. Drake playing *Dr. Lenitive*. By this time I had become *au fait* in the words of *Captain Heartwell*, and had got over in a degree my prostrating embarrassment of "Cooper's Town." The house was very full, and the season concluded with great eclat, the manager making a speech to the audience and promising

to return to them at some future day. Thus ended my first regular season as a "play actor," and I have never yet seen the day that I felt as though I would, if I could, recall the step that placed me among that maligned and misrepresented class of humanity.

After the fall of the curtain for the season, a few days were taken up by our old manager in settling some outstanding bills and making arrangements for our "flight from Egypt" and "journey to the land of promise" — Kentucky. This was to be performed by water the greatest portion of the way. The first town we were to take in was Frankfort, the seat of government of the State of Kentucky. In four or five days another "broad-horn" boat had been purchased, larger and more conveniently arranged than our former one, which had been sold.

After getting all our luggage on board and bidding some friends adieu, about three o'clock on a fine afternoon near the middle of November, A. D. 1815, we commenced our voyage down the Ohio River, or, according to the original Indian, Ho-hi-ho! — meaning, "clear water."

There was a great sameness in this water journey of about four hundred miles, with scarcely any thing occurring worth recording. The point at which Mr. Drake proposed to disembark was known then as Limestone and afterwards as Maysville, on the Kentucky side of the river, some sixty or seventy miles by water above Cincinnati. This point we reached, if I remember rightly, about a week from the time we left Pittsburg. After landing at Limestone, I was requested by Mr. Drake to go up into the village and endeavor to procure a large wagon, that might be engaged to transport our trunks and other things to Frankfort; the distance I do not recollect, but think it less than a hundred miles. As soon as I had reached the level ground at the top of the slope leading to the river, I beheld a four-horse team attached to a covered wagon standing in front of a store. As I approached the wagon, I observed a stout, rough-looking man coming towards me. When he had come near me, I said to him: "Do you belong to this wagon?" "No," said he, "this wagon belongs to me." Oho! thinks I, a specimen of Kentucky wit. One must "speak by the card" here. "Well, sir," said I, "I wish to employ some one to haul a load to Frankfort." After asking how much of a load I had, and what it consisted of, he hesitated a few minutes and then said, "Well, stranger, I think I can haul your 'plunder' for you." Now, thought I, 'tis my turn to be critical. So

I said, "Damnation, sir! what do you mean? Do you take me for a highway robber or a house-breaker? Plunder! what do you mean by that?" "Mean?" said he, "I mean I can take your 'truck' for you." "Look you, my friend," said I, "just be so good as to explain what you mean by 'plunder' and 'truck?'" I do not understand your outlandish jargon." "Jargon?" said he, and squaring himself up and looking me full in the face, "Look here, my young hoss, thar's no use for you to begin *rar-ing* and pitching here, because you can't make nuthen off o' me in that way." I thought from his looks he meant "something," and as I wished to obtain his services, I thought it best to "soothe the animal." After a few minutes' more talk, he consented to go down to the boat with me, when he and our manager soon came to terms for the transportation of our "plunder."

We found it impossible to hire a lighter wagon, by which the members of the company could be conveyed to Frankfort; and so Mr. Drake concluded to buy a small light wagon and one horse of a man with whom he made a trade in selling him the boat we had come in thus far, and taking his wagon and horse. This wagon could only seat four persons; those four were the four ladies, Mrs. Lewis, Miss Denny, and the two Misses Drake. The horse was gentle, and Mrs. Lewis drove it, Mr. Lewis most of the time walking by his side. The four-horse team moved slowly, not faster than a man could conveniently walk, and the small wagon kept along with it.

Early the following morning, after the day of our arrival at Limestone, the peregrination recommenced. First the large road-wagon with the "plunder," and the "old" and youngest Drake mounted inside, Joe Tracy walking beside the wagon. Then came the light wagon with the four ladies, Mr. Lewis walking beside the horse. As for Sam and Aleck Drake and myself, we waited until the "caravan" was out of the village, and then we started. We quietly sauntered out of town, as though we were going for a morning walk of pleasure. About 12 o'clock the wagoner stopped to feed his horses and himself, and the others necessarily stopped likewise.

I do not recollect how many days we were journeying to Frankfort, but it was not a disagreeable trip, except from being a very slow method of travelling. We did not make more than from twenty to twenty-five miles each day, and that only by starting as soon as it was light enough to see the road well. We found no "inns," except in one or two villages we passed through; yet we never had any difficulty in

finding "houses of entertainment," as they were called, which simply were no more than farmers' houses, who would take you in, and feed you and your horse with such as they had, and only make a trifling charge. I never found a more kind and hospitable people than those of Kentucky, generally, and I have travelled in almost all the States of the Union. It seemed to me in after years, when I had visited most of the Western, Southern, and Northern States, that Kentucky, as a State, could boast of more high-minded men and beautiful women than any I had ever been in. I have found there more genuine and unostentatious hospitality than in any other State, and that dispensed by princely men and courtly women, stamped with nobility by the hand of their Creator.

CHAPTER VII.

A Kentucky Dandy—Additions to the Company—Death of Jimmy Douglas—First Performance in Kentucky—Frankfort—An impromptu Serenade—A Shower of Applause—Kentucky Hospitality—A Kentucky Beauty.

WHILE the theatre was undergoing renovation, those of the company who had but recently arrived were engaged in procuring lodgings for the season, in looking around the town, and in rambling over the hills by which it is surrounded; Frankfort lying, as it were, in a basin.

When that celebrated French *savant* and traveller, Volney, was in the United States he visited Frankfort, and was asked while there what he thought of the place; he described it by taking off his hat and saying, "This is Kentucky," passing his hand over the rim of the hat, "and this is Frankfort," at the same time thrusting his knuckles down into the crown. I have often thought his illustration a good one.

I procured boarding and lodging at the house of a private family, the mistress of which was a widowed lady, whose husband had been an officer in one of the Kentucky regiments during the war of 1812-15; and had been killed at the battle of the river Raisin. There were but two or three boarders besides myself; and as the family were kind and obliging, I found myself very comfortable. One of my fellow-boarders was somewhat of an original character; at least he appeared so to me then, ignorant as I was of Western men and manners. The afternoon of the day I came as a lodger at the widow's, while I was conversing on the back gallery of the house with a very interesting young lady, daughter of the mistress of the dwelling, a young man, son of an ex-governor of Kentucky, came out, and calling to a black man, said, "Hey! Boy! Tell Chawls to bring out my maar." I was puzzled to determine what he meant. After a few moments, I said to the young lady that it seemed very strange to me a gentleman should speak of his mother in such a way, telling a colored man to have his "ma" "brought out." The young lady, who was a hearty laugh, could not refrain from indulging at my innocent blunder. As soon as she could re-

cover her equanimity, she explained that "Chawls" meant "Charles," his servant, and "maar" meant "mare," an animal, on the back of which he was about to take an airing. The following morning I heard this person, after breakfast, as he was about to leave the house, calling to "Chawls" to go up "stars" and bring his overcoat from where it was hanging on the back of a "char;" for which read "stairs" and "chair." But time and observation soon taught me not to be surprised at these deviations from correct speaking, often found in the "slave States" in those days; for I not infrequently heard the same peculiar local pronunciation even in their legislative halls, from men of eloquence and undoubted education. And even so late as the day on which I am now writing, I know of well-bred and polished gentlemen and ladies who will tell you about the "Easten sho of Virginia," meaning the Eastern shore of Virginia. This departure from their real position and education is the result of early habits acquired by being much among the negroes when children, thus superinducing a habit of false pronunciation, which in later life and at unguarded moments they use; conscious, after having done so, that they had committed an error in pronunciation. As to the individual especially referred to here, I merely speak of him as being the first person in whom I perceived this peculiarity. I shall have occasion, perhaps, to revert to him again in the course of this narrative.

During the time preparations were making for our season to commence, those actors who were expecting to be engaged by Mr. Drake had completed their arrangements with him. We found at Frankfort Mr. John Vaughan and his younger brother, Henry. The elder Vaughan had married a lady residing in that town, the daughter of a physician there, Dr. N——. Mr. Blissett and Mr. Jefferson, familiarly known as Frank Blissett and Tom Jefferson, had been members of the Philadelphia company under the management of Messrs. Wood and Warren. Indeed, Mr. Blissett had been a member of the Philadelphia company as far back as the year 1800, when Mr. Wignell was manager there. Mr. Jefferson was the oldest son of the celebrated comedian, for many years known in Philadelphia as "old Jefferson," a man universally respected for his talent, his character, and his domestic relations. Unfortunately for the gentleman I am recording as a member of Mr. Drake's company, the mantle of the father did not fall on his son's shoulders, but slipped over, to drop very gracefully on those of his grandson, our present popular Joseph Jefferson. Mr. Blissett and Mr. Thomas Jefferson had been engaged by

Mr. Noble L. Usher for his Kentucky theatres, and after his death they remained in the State, in expectation of some one assuming the management of Mr. Usher's theatrical circuit. Having concluded preliminaries with Mr. Drake by letter, they left Lexington and joined us at Frankfort in time for our opening night. Mr. John Vaughan was engaged as leading man.

Mr. Blissett was a scholar and a gentleman, an old actor and the son of an old actor, his father having been at one time a member of the companies of the Royal Theatres, London. Mr. Blissett was an excellent actor in what is termed "low comedy," and in "Frenchmen." I have never yet seen his equal in *Doctor Caius*, in the "Merry Wives of Windsor," *Bagatelle*, in the comic opera of the "Poor Soldier," and *Doctor Dablanœur*, in a farce called the "Budget of Blunders." Mr. Jefferson, although brought up in a theatre, and having gained a very thorough knowledge of the business of the stage, was yet very inefficient in his performances. He was a gentleman in his habits and manners, a very pleasant companion in the club-room, and a favorite off the stage more than on it. I may as well mention here another gentleman who joined the company soon after our opening; this was Mr. James Douglass. He was, I believe, a son of David Douglass, one of the early managers of the Drama in America, and erected the first building put up for a regular theatre in Charleston, South Carolina, as early as 1773. Mr. James Douglass, or, as he was familiarly called, "Jimmy Douglass," was about fifty years of age when he joined us, and he died in 1820, being drowned in the Wabash River. He was with a detachment of Mr. Drake's company that stopped at Vincennes to perform for a few nights, on their return to Louisville from St. Louis, where Mr. Drake's company had been performing in a ball-room of the City Hotel. Mr. Douglass had gone into the river to bathe, the weather being warm, and it was supposed had been seized with cramps, or a rush of blood to the head, and became incapable of swimming. His body was found two miles below Vincennes, in the Wabash.

The theatre at Frankfort opened for the first season under the management of Mr. Drake, early in December, 1815 (I am not able to give the precise date), with Colman's play of the "Mountaineers," and the comic operatic farce of the "Poor Soldier." Of the first piece the characters were assigned as follows: *Octavian*, Mr. J. Vaughan; *Bulcazin Muley*, Mr. S. Drake; *Count Violet*, Mr. Jefferson; *Roque*, Mr. Drake; *Kilmallock*, Mr. Ludlow; *Lope Tocho*, Mr. Blissett; *Sadi*,

Aleck Drake; *muleteers* and *messengers*, H. Vaughan, and James Drake, and others; *Lady Zorayda*, Miss Martha Drake; *Floranthé*, Miss Denny; *Agnes*, Mrs. Lewis. In this play I attempted for the first time an *Irish* character, singing the original song of the character, and having the satisfaction of being considerably applauded. In the afterpiece of the "Poor Soldier," I witnessed for the first time Mr. Blissett's performance of *Bagatelle*; it was great! His *Lope Tocho*, in the first piece, was exceedingly quaint and funny. Aleck Drake's *Darby*, in the farce, was as clever a specimen of broad low comedy as any one could wish for. The scene between him and Blissett, where *Bagatelle* is instructing and preparing *Darby* for the expected duel, was comic in the extreme. Mr. Vaughan's *Octavian*, was a "stilty," cold, and unfortunate attempt; he could have performed many other characters better.

Mr. Blissett, Aleck Drake, and Mrs. Lewis caused the play to pass off well, for the people were more inclined to laugh than to cry; so the serious parts got but little applause. When the farce came on, the laughter and applause showed plainly that the "new players," as we were called, had made a successful "hit."

On the evening succeeding our first performance in this city, the manager was called on by three gentlemen, who came for the purpose of congratulating Mr. Drake on his success, and to express the great satisfaction the people of Frankfort felt in the company he had brought to their city. If I remember rightly, those three gentlemen were Judge George M. Bibb, twice elected to the United States Senate from Kentucky; the other a Mr. Marshall (there were two of that name, prominent men in Frankfort); and the third, Mr. Willis Lee, said to be the ugliest man in Kentucky,—that is, if we may accept *his own word for it*. I will take occasion to remark here, that in those days the profession of the Stage was not that "slave's life" that it is at this present day. Then, no theatre was open to the public for more than *four* nights in each week; and in many places only three in each week. How changed the condition of the actor! Now he has to perform six nights (and in New Orleans seven) each week, with the addition of one or two matinees, or day-performances; and this through long seasons of from four to five months, with a constant succession of "stars," producing their peculiar pieces, to which they are constantly adding new ones, novelty and sensation being the order of the day. But to return to our subject.

The second night's performance at Frankfort consisted of the comedy of "Speed the Plough," with the farce of "Ways and Means." In the comedy I was called upon to study a new character, that of *Bob Handy*. The reader may, perhaps, remember I commenced my career as *Bob Handy's* servant, in the Albany theatre, New York; next performed *Sir Abel Handy*, in Pittsburg, and now was required to perform the son of *Sir Abel Handy*, — I suppose because the manager found me "handy," and therefore kept me employed in that way. But it pleased me at the same time it did the manager; for *Bob Handy* being a lively, light-comedy part, was just what I wished. The character of *Sir Abel Handy* was enacted by Mr. Blissett in a superior manner. I hustled through *Bob* with some applause. Sam Drake played *Henry*; Mr. Vaughan, *Sir Philip Blandford*; Aleck Drake, *Farmer Ashfield*. Mr. Jefferson "walked through" *Morrington*, to use a theatrical phrase. Of the female characters, Miss Denny performed *Miss Blandford*; Mrs. Lewis, *Dame Ashfield*; *Lady Handy*, Miss M. Drake, and *Susan Ashfield* by Miss Julia Drake. This latter young lady was then only about fifteen years of age, I believe, but was well-grown, and this was her first attempt at representing what is termed a "woman's part." She was well dressed, and being naturally well-formed, — with beautiful eyes, a sweet voice, clear as a silver-bell, — made a very interesting little *Susan Ashfield*. Many years after, this little lady became the mother of Julia Dean. As there are doubtless many yet living who remember the sweet and winning manners of the dear, departed Julia Dean-Hayne-Cooper, — to them I can say, You have seen and heard Julia Drake, except that the latter had darker and finer eyes than her daughter, and a more "classic," or Grecian face.

I have said that Mr. Jefferson "walked through" the character of *Morrington*. This I wish to explain. It was not, perhaps, that Mr. Jefferson could not have done more justice to the character, which, though short, is important, but that he would not; for it leaked out afterwards that he was offended and mortified in being cast for the subordinate part of *Morrington*, when there were two better juvenile characters in the comedy, namely, *Henry* and *Bob Handy*. This and a few other unappreciative managerial acts induced Mr. Jefferson to leave the company at the end of our first season at Frankfort, and to return to Philadelphia in the spring of 1816, where not many years afterwards he died. I had the pleasure, however, of meeting Mr. Jefferson again in Virginia, in 1821.

Mr. Blissett remained in the company for about two, or

perhaps three years, when he returned to Philadelphia, and shortly after left for England, to take possession of a considerable amount of property on the island of Guernsey, left him by his father, an old English actor. Mr. Blissett was a very eccentric, and at the same time, I believe, a very unhappy man. He would often remark that he had not slept two hours the preceding night. It was said by some that his mind was disturbed at times, from reflecting that he was an illegitimate son; by others that his moody hours arose from an unhappy marriage, and separation from his wife; while a third party asserted it was neither of these, but that he was afflicted with *insomnia*, or a deranged state of the nervous system that would not allow him at times to sleep. He was very fond of sitting up late at convivial parties, and would often say that it was useless for him to go home, for he could not sleep until three or four o'clock in the morning. And when he did go home, some of the young men at times would play sad tricks upon him. I remember on one such occasion, after the evening social club had terminated their joviality for the night, three or four of them formed an impromptu musical party for the purpose of serenading some young ladies in the city. Mr. Blissett declined going with them, saying, as he had slept but little the previous night, he would go to his lodgings. Now this lodging was not "on the cold ground," but was a room in the third story of a building that had been a store-house, but now vacant, in which Mr. Blissett had obtained permission to put up a bed, in order that he might have a quiet "roost," as he used facetiously to call it. He was careful to keep this lodging, which was a secluded spot, from the knowledge of the members of the company and others, lest they should annoy him with their ill-timed visits. On that evening—or rather morning, for it was about four o'clock, A. M.—this party of serenaders, on their way home, passed Mr. Blissett's "roost," and one of them, who knew the spot where the old man secluded himself, proposed that they should stop and give him a serenade. No sooner suggested than put into effect. There was some little debate about what should be sung; it was settled at last by these mischievous rogues that they would give him a good old-fashioned psalm tune, knowing Mr. Blissett's horror of popular psalm-singing, as it was heard among the unsophisticated in those days in the West. So with stentorian lungs they commenced:—

"While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down—"

They had got on very well thus far, when suddenly a *shower* came down from the third-story window, and I assure the reader it was not all "lavender-water." Then a voice from a head and night-cap roared out, "Go home, you d—d noisy rascals, and do not disturb the neighborhood with your howlings!"

It was in Frankfort I became first acquainted with Western hospitality; transplanted, as it was, from the "sacred soil" of old Virginia by her sons and daughters. I shall ever remember with pleasure the courtesy and kindness extended to me and my professional friends. I call to memory some delightful evenings spent in the house of Judge Bibb, and one of the Marshalls. The judge was very fond of music, and was no mean musician himself, if I remember rightly. It seems to me I can recollect his violin-playing, when he used to give us some "Old Virginny reels" to "kill," as we say in the West. Sam Drake was an especial favorite with the judge; for Sam played the violin well, and could improvise an accompaniment to anything the judge would "rasp off." We had the pleasure of meeting on such occasions some of the best talent of those days in Kentucky, members of the Legislature, with whom the judge's hospitality thus brought us in contact.

Here I am reminded of an incident which occurred during this season in Frankfort, that produced in me a very unfavorable estimate of female accomplishments in Kentucky, but which I found afterward was very incorrectly formed. During those ancient days piano-fortes were not as numerous as they are at present; so that if a young lady was seized with an *ardor musicale* she would sometimes manifest it in strange ways. I have previously said that my landlady—like Jephthah, Judge of Israel—had one fair daughter; indeed, she was quite a "belle" in Frankfort, and mingled with the best society. Among her young lady friends was one who lived some few miles removed from the town, but who occasionally came there to see her friends and learn the fashions. I was told that such a happy event was daily expected to transpire, and that I must buckle on a breastplate in order to guard my heart, or she would capture it; that she was the most beautiful young creature in the whole county, and "rich as cream." I will not attempt to conceal the fact that I was anxious to see her; and when the day arrived on which she was expected, I must confess I felt excited, and began to revolve in my mind how I should approach her, and what brilliant things I could say to engage her attention. She was to arrive by dinner-time

at the house where I was boarding. After my duties were over at the morning's rehearsal I hastened home from the theatre, and going privately to my room, dressed myself with great care, determined, if possible, to make a conquest. Descending to my landlady's little parlor, I inquired of her whether the beauty had arrived, and was informed she was in the main parlor, and if I would go with her she would introduce me. With some degree of nervous trepidation I followed her. We entered together, and the first object that struck my astonished sight was this renowned beauty; but oh, horror! this magnificent creature had a *fiddle under her chin!* and was "scraping" off an old Virginia "break-down."

Our first theatrical season at Frankfort terminated about the beginning of March, 1816, and was undoubtedly a success. It was the first well-organized company of comedians, making a lengthened season, that had at that time performed in the town; and their performances were generally well received. The theatre was attended by the best educated and most respectable people of the town and country around about, and the performers, many of them, received into some of the first families. I mention this latter fact, because it is somewhat singular in the history of the stage; but the truth is, that dollars had not yet, in Kentucky, usurped the place of *brains*.

For a few years prior to 1815, Kentucky and its neighbor State, Ohio, had been visited at long intervals with strolling parties of two or three performers, but no circuit had been established, nor had any well-organized company ventured thus far West; so that Mr. Drake's company, though small in numbers, was yet larger and possessed of more talent than any previous combination. Mr. Noble L. Usher had been for some years trying to establish a circuit, and probably would have succeeded, had not death closed his career just on the eve of the supposed accomplishment of his desires.

From Mr. Dunlap's "History of the American Stage" I copy the following: "In October, 1808, Mr. Usher, whose name has occurred as a member of the Boston company (in 1805), opened a theatre in Lexington, Kentucky, with the 'Sailor's Daughter' [more probably the "Soldier's Daughter"] and 'Ways and Means,' the characters performed by the 'Thespian Society.' The theatre is mentioned as superior to former accommodations of the kind; and it is said in the Western journals: 'The plan and decorations do credit to the judgment of the proprietor, Mr. Usher, as does the scenery, which competent judges pronounce equal to what is

seen to the eastward.' The 'lovers of the Drama' are congratulated, and the friends of morality, upon this first attempt which has been made to introduce a theatre in the Western country."

This Western newspaper-writer's description of the Lexington theatre must be taken "*cum grano salis*." Mr. Dunlap has adopted this, as he has some other accounts of Western and Southern theatres, from the written paragraphs and verbal reports of interested and partial men. I shall feel bound, for the sake of *truth*, to correct some of the errors into which he has unknowingly fallen; but all in due time. We thus see that Mr. Usher commenced in Lexington with *amateur* performers, as far back as 1808. He had been striving from that time to 1814 to get together a company of regular performers; but actors and actresses of talent were loath to go to the "Western wilds," as they called Ohio and Kentucky in those days, when they could get comfortable situations in New York, Boston, or Philadelphia. Some few had been induced to venture to that *terra incognita* from curiosity; but they straggled along in twos and threes, and not finding any regular companies, and but indifferent accommodations in every way, they invariably turned their faces quickly homeward.

CHAPTER VIII.

Company go to Louisville — Proceed to Lexington — Mr. Dunlap's Error — Lexington Season — A Summer Excursion — Harrodsburg — A German Friend — A Pleasant Time at the Springs — Moonlight Concert.

OUR Frankfort season closed, as I have already said, about the 1st of March, 1816; and we started for Louisville, being a journey of about fifty miles. There were no railroad accommodations between the two towns in those days, and I do not recollect that there was even a line of stages; so we procured private conveyances, and were two days in making the transit. On arriving at Louisville we found the people on the tip-toe of expectation, and anxious for the opening of the season; but the theatre was not in a condition to be occupied; it was dark, dingy, and dirty. The scenery was badly painted; the *auditorium* was done in the most dismal colors, and the house badly provided with the means for lighting it. The first matters to be attended to were the removal of those unsightly objects. There was a man living at that time in Louisville of the name of John H. Vos, a house and sign painter, who had an tolerably good taste, and some skill in scene-painting. He was employed to repaint and improve the appearance of the audience part of the house; while Mr. Drake, Sr., and his son Aleck went to work to change the aspect of the scenery.

In about two weeks the theatre had been got into a passable condition for opening, and we commenced our season with Colman's comedy of the "Heir at Law," and comic opera of "Sprigs of Laurel." In the comedy the principal characters were filled as follows: *Doctor Pangloss*, Mr. Blissett; *Lord Duberly*, Mr. Drake; *Dick Dowlass*, Sam Drake; *Zekiel Homespun*, Aleck Drake; *Kenrick*, Ludlow; *Lady Duberly*, Mrs. Lewis; *Cecily Homespun*, Miss Denny; *Caroline Dormer*, Miss M. Drake. In the farce Mr. A. Drake played *Nipperkin*. In this character he was a *fac simile* of Mr. John Bernard, the late manager of the Albany Theatre, who in turn was said to be a copy of the celebrated Edwin, of London. The performance went off with great applause, and the people appeared delighted with the company.

The only theatre in Louisville at that time stood on Jefferson Street, where it was in 1832. It was afterwards burned down. It belonged, I believe, to a gentleman of the name of Tyler. This season of ours in Louisville I understood to be the first that had been made by any regular company of comedians. It lasted about ten or eleven weeks, and was undoubtedly profitable to the management, for the house was well filled every night. The season closed with benefits to the company, all of them being well attended, and this in a town of not more than three thousand inhabitants at that time; but the people were prosperous, gay, and fond of theatrical amusements.

I do not remember any thing worthy of recording, so we will pass on to the next town, Lexington, then the seat of learning and the aristocracy of wealth. Mr. Drake had been instructed that the winter was the only season suitable for his business in Frankfort, in view of its support from persons visiting the capital during the session of the Legislature; Louisville during the spring, it being full of activity then; and Lexington during the summer. Journeying in our usual way in those days, by wagons and on horseback, we arrived in Lexington about the middle of June, 1816, and commenced preparing the house for an opening.

In consequence of the favorable notice of the Lexington theatre copied from Mr. Dunlap's book, my readers may be expecting me to speak in very eulogistical terms of it. I would be glad to do so, would the facts, as they appeared to me, justify it. Had Mr. Dunlap seen the Lexington theatre, instead of taking reports of partial persons, as he has done in relation to that and other theatrical matters West and South, I am sure he would have made some very different records. Mr. Dunlap's "History of the American Theatre" east of the Alleghany Mountains is undoubtedly most authentic and reliable, for there he could speak, as he has done, from a personal knowledge; but when he writes of the Western and Southern theatres, from mere report and sinister statements made by interested persons, then he is all astray, and we are compelled to say he is not reliable.

On our arrival at Lexington, many of us were surprised to find in the principal town of the State the poorest specimen of a theatre. I was informed the building had been a brewery, in which Mr. Luke Usher, the uncle of Noble L. Usher, had once conducted his business as a brewer of malt liquors. The second story of this building, a long and narrow one, had been fitted up for dramatic performances by an amateur society.

It was probably seventy to eighty feet in length by about twenty-five to thirty feet in width. If I remember rightly, the seats were constructed upon the amphitheatre plan,—gradually rising from the floor, one above the other, to the back, these back seats being reached by a sloping platform at one side. They were simply covered with canvas and painted, without being stuffed or having any backs to them, and the surroundings were of the most simple and unpretending character. The stock of scenery was very limited, and not very well painted. The building stood on an abruptly rising piece of ground, and the audience entered from a street nearly on a level with the floor of the second story. Adjoining this end of the building was a room for the sale of beer and other equally refined refreshments. Underneath the stage were dressing-rooms for the performers; into these they entered by a door that opened upon a cross-street. The dressing-rooms were comfortable enough, and quite equal, in fact, I may say superior, to some in theatres of greater pretensions.

Mr. Luke Usher met us with great cordiality, and welcomed us to the metropolis of Kentucky with a considerable flourish of trumpets; whether there were any cannon fired, I cannot now recollect. But certainly we were persons of distinction in the estimation of Mr. Usher, who introduced us all, and to every body, without regard to age, rank, nation, tongue, or color. With the exception of his knocking about the h's rather strangely, having been born within sound of "Bow bells," he was somewhat a country gentleman,— "a fine old English gentleman, one of the olden time." He was a man of large hospitality, and had a heart in proportion to his body, which latter was of the Falstaffian model; and his wife was no less remarkable for size and generosity. I remember with a great deal of pleasure the delicious plum-pudding I ate at her table, when she used to sit at one end and deal out the smoking, fragrant dish with a liberal hand, and with a broad, smiling, good-natured face, that plainly said to you, in her homely way, "You're heartily welcome." But, alas! these good people are gone, and with them the fine old days of English hospitality. "Could not all this flesh keep in a little life?" "After life's fitful fever, [they] sleep well."

After considerable sweeping, and cleaning, and painting, the Lexington theatre was opened by Mr. Drake and his company for the first regular season ever made there, on or about the middle of June, 1816, with Colman's comedy of "Speed the Plough;" cast of characters same as in Frankfort, with the exception of the part of *Morrington*, now played by Mr.

Drake, instead of Mr. Jefferson. The farce of the evening was "Catharine and Petruccio." *Catharine*, Miss Denny; *Petruccio*, Mr. J. Vaughan; *Grumio*, Aleck Drake. Here we had our usual good luck, that of pleasing an audience, and a general welcome from the newspapers. The satisfaction of Mr. Usher appeared complete; it seemed as though he felt he could not do enough to contribute to our comfort. Our second night's performance was Diamond's musical drama of the "Foundling of the Forest." *Count de Valmont*, Mr. J. Vaughan; *Baron Longueville*, Mr. Sam Drake; *Florian*, Ludlow; *L'Eclair*, A. Drake; *Geraldine*, Miss Denny; *Eugenia*, Mrs. Lewis; *Floribelle*, Miss Julia Drake; *Monica*, Miss M. Drake. The farce of this night was the "Village Lawyer," cast as follows: *Scout* (the village lawyer), Mr. J. Vaughan; *Old Snarl*, Mr. Drake; *Sheepface*, Mr. Blissett, in which he was extremely funny. He and Mr. Drake kept the house in a roar of laughter during the entire second act. The second night deepened the impression we had made the first. We continued from night to night to add to our laurels, and to the lining of the manager's pockets, until the weather had become extremely warm; the theatre being badly ventilated, the actors and audience began to cry out against an oppressiveness, and Mr. Drake concluded about the middle of July to close for a summer vacation, to last till about the 1st of September, when he would reopen for a fall season.

As soon as the spring season ended, a party of us set to work getting up what is technically called a "gagging-scheme," that is, we began to prepare a few nights' entertainment for some of the neighboring towns around Lexington. Our old manager, Mr. Drake, loaned us some scenery that had been used in our travelling through the northern part of New York State on our way out West, and which he still carried with him. The party consisted of Mr. Blissett, Samuel and Alexander Drake, John and Henry Vaughan, Ludlow, Douglass, and James Drake; Mrs. Lewis, Miss Denny, Martha and Julia Drake. Our first point of stopping was "Harrodsburg Springs," a place of considerable resort in those days during the hot months. These Springs were delightfully situated, and possessed medicinal qualities, the principal component being epsom salts. The *elite* of Kentucky were the visitors of those springs, where most of them gave themselves up to rural pleasures and social parties. Dissipation and extravagance were not carried then to the extent they now are at fashionable watering-places.

On our arrival at the Springs, we found we could not pro-

cure the large room of the hotel to perform in, as we had been led to believe, for it would interfere with the arrangements of dancing parties which met there two nights in each week; so we sent our baggage on to Danville, a small town about ten miles from the Springs, where we procured the court-house in which to give our performances, the courts having adjourned for the summer. Mr. Lewis had joined us as carpenter and scene-shifter, and he went on to Danville with the baggage to get a place ready for our performances. Four of us remained at the Springs, viz. : the two Drakes, Sam and Aleck, Blissett and myself, intending to rusticate there for two or three days. The same day of our arrival at Harrodsburg we were joined by a German friend of ours by the name of Koumar, who followed us from Lexington. He sang very well, and accompanied himself on the guitar; an amateur vocalist, and extravagantly fond of music. His business was that of travelling agent for an extensive jewelry establishment in New York or Philadelphia, I cannot recollect which. He was very much of a gentleman in dress and address; and although he spoke English well enough to make himself generally understood, yet at times he made some very funny mistakes. He was fond of singing in the English language, and particularly a song, popular in those days, beginning with these lines: —

“I knew by the smoke that so gracefully curled
 Around the green elms, that a cottage was near,
 And I said to myself, if there's peace in the world,
 The heart that was humble might hope for it here.
 Every leaf was at rest, and I heard not a sound
 But the woodpecker tapping the hollow beech tree.”

This he always rendered in the following attempt at English: —

“I knowt py der shmoke dat zo greasfully kurlt
 Aroundt der kreen helms, dat a cottidge vas near,
 Undt I zed to mi zelf, if durs peas in dis vurldt,
 Der hardt dat vas hoompel mite hop for it hare.
 Avery leaf vas at raste, undt I heerd note a zound
 Put der voodpaker dabbing der holla peach dree.”

Each verse of the song concludes with the last two lines above. Then during the symphony between each verse, which he whistled, he would drum with his finger-nail on the back of the guitar, giving a very good imitation of the sound the woodpecker usually makes on an old hollow tree, and at the same time his whistling was superb, and like the warbling of a bird. The ground at Harrodsburg Springs was then covered by the main building on one side of the front lawn, with a line

of cottages on the opposite side and at one end, leaving the other end open for a main entrance or approach from the road. Between these tenements was a grass lawn, pleasantly shaded with lofty trees. These cottages were generally taken by families for the summer. On the first night of our sojourn here, the weather being warm and our rooms close and hot, we took our seats under the lofty trees on the lawn to smoke our cigars and enjoy a social chat, preparatory to retiring for the night. The moon was beautifully bright, and the south breeze fanned us deliciously; anecdotes followed one another in quick succession (interspersed with lemonade with a "dash"), until the "wee hours o' night" found us still "on the green." Somebody then proposed we should go to bed. "Vas is das?" said Koumar, "go to ped?" Then throwing himself back in his chair and stretching out his hand toward the moon, said; "Who would go to ped and shleep, like a dem fool, such a night as dees? No, let us have some moozick." So into the house he went, and getting his guitar, came out and joined us again. He commenced and sang a serenade song in German. Then followed a duet, the "Minute-Gun at Sea," by Sam Drake and myself, Koumar improvising a very good accompaniment, and giving the note for the "minute-gun" by a loud rap of the knuckles on the back of his guitar, which was no bad imitation of what was intended by the composer. By the time we had finished this, there were a dozen ladies' night-caps to be seen at doors and windows of the cottages around. This was "nuts" to Koumarr, who was a great admirer of the ladies. So he said: "I'll tell you vot, boys, I'll 'stonish dem vimmins. Dey dinks 'cause I sinks in Garmin, I can't sink in English; vel, dey shall zee." So he immediately commenced the "woodpecker" song, which he had no sooner finished than some two or three men, who were sitting at their doors, commenced applauding, and sundry females were tittering and laughing quite audibly. "Dare, you zee," said Koumar, "I tolt you I would 'stonish dem." With three or four more pieces of music from the party we concluded, and went to bed between two and three in the morning.

The following day, as I and two or three of our party were at the Springs taking some of the water, a gentleman, to whom I had been introduced at Lexington, stepped up to me, and, after some general remarks, said he had been requested by a number of ladies to inquire whether it would be possible and agreeable for us to give a night's entertainment of some kind there, adding that he knew it would be very gratifying to the

ladies and a large portion of the visitors at the Springs; and although it might not prove as remunerative as they could wish, yet it would add to our popularity in Lexington, as many of the ladies and gentlemen were from that town. I told him I could not give him a definite answer at the moment, but after consulting with my brother comedians, would report to him at dinner-time. After discussing the matter together, we came to the conclusion to make up a "melange" of recitations, songs, duets, trios, and quartettes, sufficient to keep the people amused for a couple of hours. So I returned an answer that we would be ready on the evening of the following day, provided we could have the use of the ball-room. With this he appeared to be highly gratified. The landlord offered us the room lighted, free of charge. We put out some written notices of what we proposed to offer them in the way of amusement, and stated the price of admission, which was one dollar for each person. That was not thought unreasonable in those days for any species of public entertainment. The theatre price was then always a dollar for the best seats. The night came, and so did the people to the extent of the room's capacity. The hall was well lighted; three negro musicians, who stopped at the hotel, and played for the balls given there, volunteered to give a tune occasionally between our pieces, for the privilege of being present. A side room served for our exit and entrance on the performance of each piece, and the entertainment passed off with great applause! The audience had, however, got possessed with the idea, or pretended to be, that Mr. Koumar was one of our company; and although there was no mention of him in the programme, they wished to hear him sing, and therefore, at the close of the entertainment, called loudly for the "German gentleman." Koumar, who had come with us into our private quarters, was astounded and alarmed when I told him the audience were calling for *him*. "Mein Gott!" cried he, "Vas dey wants ob me? I'm not in de pills!" But they kept up the calls, "Give us the 'Woodpecker?'" "Give us the German song!" After much delay, I went forward and told the audience that Mr. Koumar was a friend of ours, but not a member of our company, nor of the theatrical profession. But if it would gratify the ladies, and they would allow time to procure his guitar from his room, it would, I thought, afford him great pleasure to gratify them. This was received with immense applause; and in a few minutes the landlord had got his guitar for him, and I introduced Mr. Koumar upon

the stage, being his first, and I believe his only appearance in that situation. The next morning, after settling our bills, we found ourselves some dollars richer, and had made some pleasant acquaintances ; when we rode away for Danville, with pressing invitations to call again at Harrodsburg Springs.

CHAPTER IX.

Danville — Mrs. Davenport — The “Green-eyed Monster” — Paris — An Odd Spectator — Company return to Lexington — Fall Season in Lexington — Joshua Collins — A Ludicrous Incident — Company go to Frankfort — Kindness of the Kentuckians — Puppyism — Triumphant Conclusion.

AFTER a pleasant ride of two hours on horseback, — for each of the present party owned a horse at this time, — we reached Danville about noon, and found Lewis had nearly got the place ready for our opening performance. Danville was the capital of Mercer County, and is about thirty miles from Lexington. It contained in 1816 probably not much over one thousand people; but they were all in comfortable circumstances. It was contiguous to a portion of the most fertile of the Kentucky lands, and I have no doubt is at this day a beautiful and thriving city. I have never seen it since my first visit, which I am now mentioning; but even in those days it was a thriving place, and contained a hotel that I found possessing as many real comforts as any at which I ever stopped. It was kept by a widowed lady by the name of Davenport, and a “jewel of a landlady” she was. I speak of her in particular, because she made us all feel so much at home in her house; treated us more like members of her own family than strangers; and we all endeavored to requite her for her kindness by giving as little trouble as possible to her or her household.

Our opening performance here was a petit comedy, in three acts, called “The Midnight Hour,” with the farce of the “Poor Soldier.” The people were delighted, of course, for it was the first dramatic performance that had ever been given in the town.

Our time passed very pleasantly. We performed but three nights in a week, and this gave us leisure to ride out in the evenings and view the beautiful country around Danville. On one occasion a party of us paid another visit to the Harrodsburg Springs, stopping overnight and returning the next morning. We made several very pleasant acquaintances in Danville. I do not remember to have enjoyed more real pleasure, for the same length of time, at any period of my life. Yet in the midst of all this comfort an event transpired

which grieved me much, as it lost me the friendship of a man whom I esteemed very highly.

Mr. Francis Blissett, of our company, was an elderly man when I knew him, probably forty-five years of age, and somewhat eccentric in his ways. A good scholar, tolerably well acquainted with Greek, Latin, and French authors, and a great stickler for a correct pronunciation of the English language according to "John Walker," to whom he always referred at any time when his correctness was questioned, and sometimes even giving the *page* (folio edition) where you could find the contested word. I have always entertained towards him the kindest feelings for the interest he appeared to take in me at one time, by correcting what he called my "Americanisms." Mr. Blissett was my firm friend, I believe, for seven or eight months of our first acquaintance; when he then made, as he supposed, a discovery, which turned all his kindness into uncompromising hostility. The old gentleman was not without a spice of vanity in his composition, yet could make himself very agreeable to ladies — and gentlemen, too — whenever he pleased to do so.

There was a certain bright-eyed young damsel, who used at times to find pleasure in his society, and he flattered himself he was gaining her affections very securely day by day. Well, it so happened that one fine summer evening this little bright-eyed lady formed the idea of taking an experimental ride on horseback with the writer of this journal, and did not come back until the "shades of evening" had begun to close in. As the two were separating at the back door of the hotel, Mr. Blissett was descending the hall-stairs, and heard, or fancied he heard, something that sounded very much like a "smacking of lips," as he afterwards informed one of the offending party. That was enough for him; for "Trifles, light as air, are, to the jealous, confirmations strong as proof of holy writ." Both offenders lost favor with Mr. Blissett, and on this writer he ever afterward turned a "cold and withering look."

When the time came for me to leave Mr. Drake's company, Mr. Blissett still continued a member of it; but withdrew within two or three years after, and went to Philadelphia. He left the United States, as I heard, in the summer of 1822, and returned to England, having been called there to take possession of a handsome property left him by his father at his death, in 1821. Mr. Blissett, I understood, performed in the islands of Guernsey and Jersey, until he settled up his father's affairs. He had considerable property in the island of Guernsey. After this he went to the south of France, where he

died in 1848, aged seventy-five years. His father was a contemporary and friend of the great actor, David Garrick.

Our sojourn in Danville lasted only about sixteen days, during which time we gave, I believe, seven or eight performances, the people coming not only from the town, but from miles around, and we left very much pleased with the place and its inhabitants.

As in about two weeks we should be required in Lexington to reopen the theatre for the fall, we concluded to occupy that time in the town of Paris, a small place, about twenty miles from Lexington. Here, as before, we procured a ball-room in the hotel, and opened with a good comedy and farce, the titles of which I do not remember. On the second night we acted the pathetic tragedy of the "*Gamester*," a play that seldom, if ever, fails to move the audience to tears, no matter wherever or by whomsoever performed. But on this occasion it failed to produce that effect, certainly on one individual. This was a jolly, round-faced, "huge fat man," whom I noticed seated midway of the front bench, near the foot-lights. He appeared to be about forty years of age, and was well dressed. I first noticed him in the third scene of the third act, between *Beverly* (Mr. Vaughan) and *Stukely* (Samuel Drake), where *Beverly* rushes from the gambling-room, frantic with having lost all his wealth. The characters were very respectably performed by those two gentlemen; but this fat man burst out into a most immoderate fit of laughter, that drew the eyes of actors and audience upon him; yet he seemed not conscious of it, and continued laughing and shaking his fat sides as though he enjoyed it as much as he could have done had it been a most laughable farce. Mr. Vaughan seemed very much annoyed, and I thought at one time was about to speak to him; but Drake said something to Mr. Vaughan in an undertone, and they went on with the scene, the man still enjoying it hugely, in his way.

In the fourth act I had a scene, as *Lewson*, with *Stukely*; the man still continued laughing at intervals, and at the point where *Lewson* puts himself on guard, expecting *Stukely's* assault with his sword, the fat man threw himself back and fairly roared. I must confess I felt exceedingly vexed, and was on the point of speaking to him, when Drake said, "Don't mind him; go on!" His laughing caused others, that were as silly as himself, to laugh. Before the fifth act commenced, we sent to the landlord a request that he or some one else would speak to the man, and inform him he was annoying the performers and disturbing the audience, and that he must

either desist from his peculiar demonstrations or withdraw ; and to tender him his price of admission, should he prefer the latter course. The man remained, and did certainly restrain his mirth to a considerable extent ; but in the last scene of all, where *Beverly* is in the agonies of death, and the audience and actors were shedding tears, I looked at him to discover what effect the scene had upon him, and I beheld the villain holding his fat sides and laughing internally, his face being red with his efforts to restrain an outbreak ; and as the curtain dropped he gave vent to a regular *explosion of mirth* ! We were at a loss to account for his strange conduct, but the matter had arrived at that time to the point of the absolutely ridiculous, and we could not help laughing in our turn. Aleck Drake, who was not in the tragedy, had been highly amused with the man's strange behavior, and when he came behind the scenes to dress for the farce, said, " Well, I shall have one good laugh in front to help me on with the farce." But, to his horror, and the astonishment of us all the man sat out the whole of one of the most comic and truly laughable farces we performed, and never even smiled once. He was watched by most of the company, and while the audience were convulsed with laughter he sat as immovable as a statue, and to all appearance as insensible. We were greatly puzzled what to make of the man ; he appeared to us a perfect *lusus nature*. We questioned our landlord, who knew him, and who told us he was sure he did not act in that way for the purpose of insulting us ; that he was an honest, civil, and simple-minded man ; and to questions put to him by persons after the performance, expressed himself as highly pleased with the night's entertainment. The landlord suggested, what we thought probable, that the only way of accounting for the strange conduct of this man was, that he had never witnessed a dramatic performance before ; that he had heard " actors were funny people ;" that he had come prepared to laugh, and as the actions of the performers were strange to him, he did laugh, without regard to or feeling any interest in what was said by them. But then, why not laugh when the farce was performed ? The landlord supposed " by that time he had laughed his laugh out," and had exhausted himself in the effort, or was too tired to laugh any more.

The time having arrived for our return to Lexington, we took our leave of the " Parisians."

Our fall season at Lexington opened early in September, 1816, but was not of more than ordinary interest. The manager made a few additions to his company in the way of " stock "

performers, and we had for the first time a "star" in the person of Mr. Joshua Collins, who afterward became a partner of my old friend William Jones; and together these gentlemen managed for a while some of the Western theatres, as the firm of Collins & Jones. Mr. Collins's residence was, in 1816, I think, in Cincinnati; but he came to Lexington to play a few nights and have a benefit. He opened, if I remember aright, in Kotzebue's play of the "Stranger," or rather a translation from that German writer, to which is given the above English title. He also performed *Othello* to Mr. Vaughan's *Iago*, on which occasion I enacted *Cassio* for the first time; Miss Denny, *Desdemona*; and Mrs. Lewis, *Emilia*. Mr. Collins, during this engagement, performed *Penruddock*, in Cumberland's play of the "Wheel of Fortune," in which for the first time I performed *Sydenham*. Mr. Collins was a sensible actor, but not particularly "taking" in his performance of tragedy, of which he was very fond. His personal appearance was decidedly against him; for he was a small, wedge-faced man, with a turned-up nose, face badly pock-pitted, his body a skeleton, and his legs what *Robert Faulconbridge* would call two "riding-rods;" and when he repeated those lines of *Othello*: "For since these arms of mine had seven years' pith, they've used their dearest action in the tented field," I could not help thinking the "pith" had not grown much since that seventh year. Nevertheless, Mr. Collins being a good reader, and having generally a correct idea of his characters, was a very passable actor for the backwoods of those days; but his comic old men were decidedly good. I remember him well in the character of *Restive*, the enraged politician, in the farce of "Turn Out!" and I have never seen his performance of it equalled. Mr. Collins played this character on his benefit-night, when the farce was cast as follows, and I question whether it was ever better performed in the United States: *Restive*, Mr. Collins; *Doctor Truckle*, Mr. Blissett; *Gregory*, Mr. Aleck Drake; *Forage*, Mr. Sam Drake; *Capt. Sommerville*, Mr. Ludlow; *Marian Ramsay*, Miss Denny; *Peggy*, Mrs. Lewis. The farce was performed to "roars" of laughter. Mr. Collins enacted during this engagement the character of *Shylock*, in the "Merchant of Venice." Here his figure and face were not so much at variance with the person of the character, and his conception and illustration of it was above mediocrity.

A rather ludicrous scene occurred on the night that Mr. Collins enacted *Shylock*, which I will relate. In act first, scene second, a room in the house of *Lady Portia*, there is

a scene between the lady and *Nerissa*, her maid, during which a servant enters, to whom *Portia* addresses these words: "How now! What news?" To this the servant replies: "The four strangers seek for you, madame, to take their leave, and there is a *courier* come from the Prince of Morocco, who brings word, the Prince, his master, will be here to-night." Now, it so happened that the manager had cast a young man by the name of Plummer, for this servant, who was a great tobacco-chewer, and generally had his mouth full of "the weed;" it was so when he was required to deliver, on the stage, the above few words of the servant. At the proper cue, Plummer walked on the stage, and to *Portia's* question of "What news?" Plummer, assuming an important and dignified manner, and revolving his enormous quid of tobacco in one cheek, said, "There's three or four strangers looking for you, and there's a *currier* from *Morocco*." He had only got those words out when the manager, who was standing at the opposite side, behind the scenes, shouted out, "What's the price of leather? D—n your eyes!" The audience caught the words, and joined with the actors in a general roar of laughter. It was near ten minutes before equanimity was restored, sufficient to allow the play to be properly heard. This young man, Plummer, was the son of a Methodist preacher, who lived somewhere near the mouth of Kentucky River, and was as fine a specimen of the genus "Kentuck" as I ever met with. He did not lack education, and was as manly, generous-hearted, and whole-souled fellow as ever "stepped in shoe-leather;" but he was no actor.

Our fall season in Lexington concluded about the last of November; and we proceeded at once to Frankfort. Our Lexington season added something to the manager's treasury, and was the cause, perhaps, of adding to my salary, which was increased without any application from me. In this the old gentleman fulfilled his promise made to me in Albany, at the time of my joining his company, namely, that should he be successful in his venture, he would advance my interest in proportion to my improved usefulness in the profession.

We opened in Frankfort about two weeks prior to the assembling of the Legislature, as an *experiment*, to ascertain what the town could do for us without the aid of strangers. The first week was well enough, but the second was not profitable; there not being play-going people sufficient to sustain the theatre for any great length of time. I do not remember what the pieces of the opening night were, but during the season the following plays were performed, viz.:

“Adelgitha,” in which I played *Lothair*; “Castle Spectre,” in which I now performed *Earl Percy*; “Jane Shore,” in which I personated *Lord Hastings*; “Rivals,” in which I performed the Irish gentleman, *Sir Lucius O’Trigger*; “Speed the Plough,” *Bob Handy*; “Foundling of the Forest,” *Florian*; “Way to get Married,” *Tangent*; “Lovers’ Vows,” the *Rev. Anhalt*; “Inkle and Yarico,” *Inkle*; “Curfew,” *Robert*. These and many others, and a host of farces, it fell to my lot to have to go on for, and do the best I could with them.

The citizens of Frankfort appeared pleased that the “players had come,” and we met with a hearty welcome from old acquaintances, and made some new ones.

During this season a circumstance transpired very gratifying in some respects to the ladies and gentlemen of the theatre, but very annoying in some of its attendant results. I shall ever remember with pleasant feelings the kindness and hospitality of the citizens of Frankfort, and regret exceedingly that such courteous welcome as they were pleased to extend to us should have been marred by the “puppyism” of *one* individual; and what I shall now relate is done more to illustrate the kindness to which I have referred than from any other motive. About the time of the Christmas and New Year holidays a ball was gotten up by the young men of the town, and among a few *invited* persons, members of the Legislature and others, certain individuals of the theatre were included. The ladies of the theatre declined, but three of the men accepted invitations,—Samuel Drake, Aleck Drake, and myself. On the evening of the ball we did not arrive until the amusement had progressed pretty far into the night. We were introduced to a number of young ladies, and my two friends danced frequently; but for myself, I danced but once, and that was with the handsome daughter of my hostess. I always had an antipathy to dancing, but I could not refuse an invitation to dance with this young lady.

The night passed away very pleasantly. We tried to make ourselves agreeable to the ladies, and when the ball was over we congratulated ourselves on the probable impression we had left on the minds of all present, young and old.

Among the company of that night was the exquisite individual referred to in chapter seventeen of this narrative,—he who wished “Chawls” to bring out his “maar.” This young man had always appeared to wish to be considered my friend, from the time I commenced boarding in the same house with him. About two weeks after the ball just spoken of, he came to

my room one day, and, among other remarks, asked me in a friendly way if I proposed attending the next ball, likely to come off in about a week. I told him I had not heard of any ball, and did not know whether I should go or not. 'After a few moments' consideration I was led to suppose, from his manner of asking the question, that he meant something more than a careless, ordinary inquiry would indicate; and I asked him why he inquired. He seemed, at first, as though he wished to avoid an explanation, and that produced in me a stronger determination to have one. After some equivocation, in which I followed him up closely, he said he had come as a friend to advise me *not to go* to the contemplated ball. Of this I instantly required an explanation. He said, after apparently some restraint, objections had been started in regard to the gentlemen of the *theatre* being admitted. I asked him from whom? And he replied, the "committee," as he called it, refusing to give their names; but I insisted so strenuously that he at last mentioned the name of one. After some further questioning and answering we separated. I immediately determined I would call on this gentleman of the "committee" who had been named, and started for that purpose. On the street I met with my brother actor, Samuel Drake; and we went together. The gentleman referred to seemed at first inclined to be very reticent, and inquired who told me such matters as I had stated. I replied there was no secrecy in the affair, and mentioned the person's name. He colored up, and bit his lips for a moment; and then promptly, and in a manly way, said: "Gentlemen, you are both strangers to me; I never saw either of you before, except in your professional capacity; I know nothing in relation to either of you, good or bad; but I *did* cast my vote in the committee against the gentlemen of the theatre being invited to the ball, and it was because the very person who gave you this information proposed the matter, he professing at the time to be well acquainted with most of the male members of the dramatic corps." This candid and open declaration determined us at once as to whom we should look for further explanation.

As we were returning to my lodgings, we met my sophistical friend (?) in company with a gentleman. We stopped the former, and stated what we had done, and what the gentleman we had left had said in reference to him. He endeavored to escape the odium I had pinned upon him by saying the "reason for his starting the question before the committee was, because *ladies* who were present at the former ball had objected

to going if members of the theatrical company were to be present." I told him plainly that I doubted the *truth* of his assertion; that I believed it to be simply an evasion on his part; and concluded with some very plain language, that was quite impossible for him to mistake, and we quietly walked away. I never heard from the young "spark" after.

Now the sequel to all this was that the affair became public. The ladies got hold of this false and despicable imputation charged to their account, and they set about to revenge themselves on the offender, or rather offenders, for there were two other objectors in addition to the one before mentioned, who had kept themselves in the background. These latter two had taken offence because two of the men of the theatre had made themselves more agreeable to two certain young ladies at the ball than was pleasant to these two aforesaid aspiring youths.

The revenge that was sought and carried out was this: There was another ball gotten up, it was said, by the *ladies*, and called the "Young Ladies' Ball," to which *three* certain young men of the *theatre* were invited, and *three* certain young men of the *city were not!*

I have been rather particular in mentioning this unpleasant affair, for it had great influence on my after life, inasmuch as it determined me never to attend another public ball, and I have kept that determination up to the present day, excepting only in two instances, and one of them was a large ball given to Gen. Lafayette, by the citizens of Mobile, in 1825; the other, a few years subsequent, a "Masonic ball" given at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, when two *lady Masons* were present who had been recently admitted as such, one of them being my own wife.

CHAPTER X.

Second Season in Louisville—Aaron Phillips—Judge Wm. Thompson—A Warm Friend—Mr. Richard Taylor, Brother of Gen. Zachary Taylor—First Meeting with the Lady who became the Author's Wife—Author as a Manager—Conclusion of Louisville Season—Russelville—John J. Crittenden—Absalom Sharp—The Party reach Nashville—The First (Salt-House) Theatre.

OUR second season in Louisville commenced about the 1st of April, 1817. I have no recollection of the pieces we opened with. We had an accession to our company here in the person of a Mr. Phillips. His name was Aaron J. Phillips. Mr. Phillips commenced with us in the early part of our Louisville season, it being understood that the manager was to allow him to perform six nights, and have a benefit on the seventh, Mr. Phillips to select the plays in which he was to appear. Of course his selections were those in which he could appear in prominent characters, viz., *Richard*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, and the like. Mr. Phillips was an actor of no particular excellence, yet passable in his general performances; as he advanced in years he became stout, and dropped naturally into the line of old men, which he performed on the stages of New York and Philadelphia for many years prior to his death.

Having had my temper soured by what I had recently passed through in Frankfort, and my personal respect brought into question because I was an *actor*, I resolved on a life of seclusion from society, determined to be seen as little as possible, except in the discharge of my professional duties. In short, after due deliberation, I laid down for myself a course which I seriously and most resolutely determined I would pursue for a few coming years. My readers, if disposed to follow me in this relation, will discover how closely I adhered to this determination. First, I resolved to avoid society, and particularly female society; this would save me from some mortifications, and give me more time to study my profession; of course, matrimony was not to be thought of. Secondly, I resolved to pursue my professional course in the West for two years; then go East, remain in the theatres there two years; then go to England, study my profession there for two more years; after which, return to my own country, presuming I could then hold up my head with the best of my

brother actors. I entered upon this good work with a determined mind and a most resolute purpose.

I was a hard and close student, seldom seen in the streets, and then only when going to or returning from my customary ride on horseback, late in the afternoons. My conduct being so singularly different from most of the other young men of the company, excited some curiosity to learn what was the cause of it. I had one friend whom I was always glad to have visit me, — Judge William Tompkins, — and he was a warm friend, an intelligent friend, and always welcome to me. The judge used to amuse himself and me by relating, in our hours of social intercourse, what he heard about me at the different places he visited. The elder portion of those he heard speak of me attributed my seclusion to good habits, and a laudable desire of improving myself; but the younger portion, especially ladies, said they did not believe a word of that, and had made up their minds that it was “some disappointed-love affair” that had soured me, or else I was a “woman-hater.” The sequel will show how near these young people (who always know more than old ones) were to being right in their conclusions.

The theatrical season progressed very satisfactorily for me. I met with no more unpleasant adventures; but, on the contrary, several matters transpired tending to my future comfort and happiness. It was my good fortune, among other incidents, to be a boarder in a hotel in Louisville not far from where the “Galt House” stood, and nearly opposite a large hotel at that time kept by Col. Throckmorton. The hotel at which I boarded was a quiet, unpretending house, just suited to my feelings, and was kept by Mr. Richard Taylor, brother of my much respected and distinguished friend, Zachary Taylor, not many years ago President of the United States. I was first introduced to Gen. Zachary Taylor by his brother Richard, in that hotel. I had the pleasure of renewing my acquaintance with the general at New Orleans, on his immediate return from the Mexican war; but of this meeting I shall have occasion to speak more hereafter.

I have said it was “my good fortune,” and I repeat it, to be an inmate of the house of Mr. Richard Taylor in the spring of 1817; and if I had been in the house of my own father and mother, I could not have been treated with more kindness; in fact, I was received by Mr. and Mrs. Taylor more as a son than a stranger.

During the course of this theatrical campaign in Louisville, a scheme was projected between certain members of the com-

pany that they should, at the conclusion of the season, start out with a dramatic corps on the "commonwealth" system, and play their way through Kentucky, to Nashville, Tennessee, where it was said theatricals were wanted, and where there had not yet been a regular dramatic company. I was solicited to become one of the members, but at first I turned a deaf ear to their proposals. However, as the season progressed, a circumstance occurred that completely changed my previous settled views in regard to my future life; and this circumstance was presented in the form of a small black-eyed widow, who afterwards became my wife, from whom I was never after separated more than six months at any time for over forty-five years. She was the mother of our eight children, and grandmother of a host of little ones. Here was a sudden change in my bachelor plans; but I had not then read the sage remarks of the elder Mr. Weller to his son "Samivel," to "beware of the vidders," and if I had I do not believe it would have changed my intentions. This lady happened to be a boarder in the same house with Mr. John Vaughan and family; and an intimacy having grown up between Mrs. Vaughan and her, she was frequently in that lady's room. One day Mr. Vaughan invited me to go home with him, as he wished to converse privately with me on some business connected with their future scheme, and then and there for the first time I met this lady; and permit me to say, just here, that it occurred to me not many days after that she would exactly fit a vacant place in my heart, that was craving to be filled up, notwithstanding all my former resolutions. From looking came liking, and from liking came loving, and from loving came marriage.

It was not long after this that I made up my mind to join this "commonwealth" party, then forming to go to Nashville, to which I was moved in a great degree by the fact that the parents and friends of my "lady-love" resided in the neighborhood of Nashville; and I had a desire to see and be seen by them, prior to our marriage, which was to take place shortly after our arrival there. Ours was no romantic attachment of a foolish boy and wild girl. We were both old enough to know what we were about to undertake. I was twenty-two years of age when we married, and my wife, although to appearance quite as young as I was, was one year my senior. She was thought to be very handsome, not only by myself, but by all who saw her; and I hope I will be pardoned for saying, at this advanced stage of my life, that when I married her she was a perfect model of womanly beauty, with as hand-

some arm and hand, foot and ankle, as ever lady could boast of. I say, when I married her, for in after years she became very stout; and those who may have seen her on the stage during the latter portions of her professional career will bear testimony to her fine appearance in the *Widow Rackett*, in the "Belle's Stratagem;" *Mrs. Candour*, in "School for Scandal," and similar characters.

Having determined to commit matrimony, I began to think of the ways and means of supporting a wife, and possibly a family. The lady I was about to marry knew nothing of theatres, having never seen but two or three dramatic performances at that time, and those she witnessed in Louisville during our then progressing season. However, she expressed a willingness to try the experiment of playing on the stage, and if likely to succeed, of continuing it as a profession.

We soon formed our company, which we concluded to limit to a very few, and the only two ladies we had to start out with were both novices. We proposed to play at several small towns in Kentucky before venturing to Nashville, our point of destination. This small company was made up of Mr. John Vaughan and his brother Henry Vaughan, Mr. A. J. Phillips, and myself, and a man by the name of Bainbridge, the latter being a musician, who was to do some small parts on the stage, and be a whole orchestra off it; but, owing to a very broad English county accent, his speaking on the stage was not always intelligible to those not accustomed to the legitimate Lincolnshire dialect. One of the ladies was Mrs. Vaughan, the wife of Mr. John Vaughan, and the other my intended wife. Mrs. Vaughan was the daughter of a Dr. Newberry, of Frankfort, Kentucky, where Mr. Vaughan married her, and who had not at that time tried her abilities on the stage; but she was young, very handsome, tall, possessed of a fine figure, and was a blonde. The other lady was a brunette, not quite as tall as Mrs. Vaughan, and had dark hair and eyes. So that what we lacked in female talent was in a measure compensated for in female beauty.

Our season in Louisville terminated about the last of May, and of all the benefits, I think mine was the most remunerative, unless it might have been Miss Denny's. My excellent benefit was said to have arisen in a great degree from a desire on the part of the citizens to express their approbation of my conduct off the stage as much as for any thing I had done on it. Some of the young men of the theatre, who were in the habit of visiting coffee-houses and billiard-

saloons, had made enemies there, who worked against them when their benefits came off.

“Had I so lavish of my presence been,
So common-hackneyed in the eyes of men,
So stale, and cheap, to vulgar company—”

perhaps I should have shared their fate. But to continue the quotation : —

“By being seldom seen, I could not stir
But, like a comet, I was wondered at.”

In short, the sedate and quiet portion of the citizens came to my benefit (as I was told) because they considered me an exemplary young man, and they wished to show their appreciation of my course of conduct. Many of another order of men came because it was said there would be a full house, and they had no ill-will towards me, for they knew nothing of me. So that Hamlet's advice is good in such cases, as well as in that he gave his mother — “assume a virtue, if you have it not.” What was no more than a stubborn will of self-respect in secluding myself in the way I did, was construed to have arisen from a modest estimate of my own merits. I mention this more as a matter of example for young men just commencing the histrionic profession as the effect of a modest, retiring course of conduct, rather than the opposite, which many pursue, with the hope of making friends “out-doors,” as it is called, but in which, after spending their money for that purpose, they find themselves greatly mistaken.

Having obtained a set of travelling scenes, a wagon and horses to transport them and our baggage, and saddle-horses for ourselves, early in the month of June, 1817, we took leave of our old manager, Mr. Drake, and his company, and started out on our own responsibility, towards Nashville. The first village we stopped at was called Elizabethtown, about a day's travel from Louisville, where we performed in the only hotel of the place; and as the town was small, so were the audiences. We performed but two farces only, on each night of our stay there, which seemed to satisfy the people and suited best the limited capacity of our company. Here our two ladies made their “first appearance on any stage,” in the farce of the “Weathercock,” which was performed as a first piece: Mrs. Vaughan as *Variella*, which she did astonishingly well for a novice, and my “intended” appearing as *Ready*, her maid; the latter a short part of some twenty or thirty lines, which she contrived to speak loud enough to be

heard by about half of the audience in a ball-room, and she was so much frightened that if she had not already got her full growth she would never have grown an inch afterwards. On our second night in this town we played for one of our pieces the farce of the "Village Lawyer," in which I enacted the character of *Old Snarl*. This character so pleased the good denizens of Elizabethtown that I was known to them only as *Old Snarl*. They even christened a *mare* that belonged to me "Mrs. Snarl," a very pretty animal I had purchased in Louisville, and on which my "intended" was making her way to Nashville. I shall probably speak more of this animal hereafter, as she was possessed of remarkable qualities.

From Elizabethtown we went to Russellville, a still larger town, where we were supported proportionally better. Here I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with John J. Crittenden, Esq., afterwards the eminent senator, then an excellent lawyer, professionally attending a court in session there. This gentleman introduced me to Absalom M. Sharp, Esq., a prominent lawyer in Kentucky, who likewise was attending court; from both of these gentlemen I received some attention. Mr. Crittenden, I think resided in Russellville, but Mr. Sharp's residence was in Hopkinsville, a town not very far distant.

From Russellville we went to Hopkinsville, but not being able to procure a room suitable to perform in, we proceeded on our journey without delay. On this day's journey from Hopkinsville, an incident transpired in regard to "Mrs. Snarl," the *mare* before spoken of, that I think worthy of recording here, as showing an extraordinary power, — almost, if not positively, displaying *mind*, rational faculties.

On the road, and when we were within about three miles of "Paradise," the place at which we purposed to take dinner, as we were ascending a pretty sharp rise of the ground in the road, the saddle on which my "intended" was riding on the back of "Mrs. Snarl" began to slip, and I discovered that the girth was too slack. So we dismounted, and I took the saddle off the mare's back, and having adjusted the blanket underneath, I tightened the girth, lifted the lady into her seat, and proceeded on our road. When within about a half-mile of Paradise she missed her reticule, that had been hanging at the horn of the saddle. There was a pocket-handkerchief of hers in it, and a very fine silver-mounted dirk, that had been made a present to Mr. J. Vaughan, and which he prized very highly on account of the giver. This he had taken from under his vest on the road, finding it unpleasant while riding, and

the lady had undertaken to carry it for him in her reticule. The losing of this dirk, I saw, troubled her, and I proposed we should proceed to the dining-place, and while dinner was being prepared I would go back and try to find the lost articles. As soon as we arrived at "Paradise," I threw my saddle on the back of Mrs. Snarl, she being faster and more pleasant to ride than the animal I had been on, and started back on the road we had just travelled over. In a very short time I came to where the road "forked," and I paused to consider which of these roads we had come; I decided on the right hand one, which proved to be the wrong one. I found the mare now unwilling to go. She would pace off for a few rods, and then stop; this she did three or four times. I could not understand why she should suddenly be so unwilling to proceed, unless it was from a desire to return to where the other horses had stopped, and were likely to be watered and fed. While I was pondering on this idea, and trying to urge her along, a man came towards me on foot, and I thought it advisable to inquire whether I was on the direct Hopkinsville road. His reply was that I should have taken the other branch of the fork, and told me I could reach that road by taking a "cow-path" leading through the woods a short distance behind me, saying I would find it on my right hand. I turned the mare's head, she went off then at a rapid pace, and as I came to the path on my right she darted into it almost without my guidance; in a few minutes we struck a plain road, and as quick as thought she set off at full racking speed, and in the proper direction to the right, when the opposite would have taken us to where we had stopped for dinner. I remembered that it was at the top of a small piece of rising ground that the saddle was taken off; and at the first I came to I tried to check her up, but she champed the bit, and appeared unwilling to stop. I gave her the rein, and away she started again like a deer, and in about five minutes came to a dead halt, almost pitching me on to her neck by the sudden action. I looked ahead of me on the descending ground, and saw some leaves lying by the roadside, that I had stripped from a switch, broken where we had stopped to adjust the saddle, with the view of urging forward the horse I was on at that time. I immediately dismounted to hunt for the reticule, satisfied I had arrived at the right spot, leaving the mare standing in the road; and while I was engaged in the search about ten paces below her, she quietly walked into the small undergrowth of hazel bushes on one side, and about twenty feet from the road, commenced pushing her nose in among and

biting at the small bush-leaves; and there she stood until I had given up the search, and went to get her, intending to mount and ride back to our party, when taking her by the rein, near the bit, to raise her head, *I saw the reticule on the ground before me!* And it was at least twenty feet further from the road than either the lady, I, or the mare had been till then. But, methinks I hear the reader say, "How did the reticule get so far from the road?" In this way: when I took the saddle off, I caught it by the front bow and back skirt, and giving it a swing to the left, over my head, laid the saddle down near the edge of the road on the grass; but in that swing the reticule flew from the right-hand horn of the saddle, and the weight of the dirk gave an impetus that carried it to the spot where I found it. Now, I ask the readers to solve this mysterious matter. Did the mare *see* where the reticule went at the time it flew from the saddle? And if she did not, why should she have walked into the bushes where it *was*, when there was the same opportunity of her obtaining grass and green leaves on the opposite side of the road? It has always been a question I could not solve. I will only add that if I had been on a railroad locomotive I probably could not have got back to my fellow-travellers sooner than I did on the back of "Mrs. Snarl." We all enjoyed our dinner that day in Paradise. Mrs. Snarl was voted the thanks of the whole party.

Before leaving "Paradise," I wish to inform my readers that it did not derive its title from any resemblance to the Garden of Eden. It might, perhaps, have been called the "Garden of Eating," for the house was surrounded by a garden; but whether the productions were of the same kind as those cultivated by old father Adam, I am not able to say; but I rather think they were not. Paradise was, I believe, the name of the man who kept the house. On the day following our leaving "Paradise," we arrived at Nashville, the city of our destination, and the only city at that time in the State of Tennessee, unless it may have been Knoxville, in East Tennessee. We found Nashville a well-built, though small city of about three thousand inhabitants; the houses arranged on the four sides of a square, the court-house occupying the centre, and the whole appeared to be situated on a solid rock, the surface of which was visible for nearly the entire square. I say it *appeared* to be a solid rock, but recent explorations have been made, I believe, by which it has been discovered that this rock is only solid to a certain depth, and that beneath is an immense cavern, which extends under the entire

city ; and there are now people apprehensive that the whole may one day descend to the infernal regions, or some other place nearly if not quite as uncomfortable. This much I must say for it : it is the hottest place I ever was in, and if the infernal regions are not beneath it, they are not far from it. There were three hotels at that day, situated each on a separate side of the public square ; they were the Bell Tavern, the Nashville Inn, and Talbot's Hotel. We all put up at the "Bell Tavern," then kept by a gentleman of the name of Baker, who afterwards, for many years, pursued the same occupation in New Orleans, where some of his descendants now reside.

After a day of rest, we began to look about us for a place that we could turn into a temporary theatre. The only one we could find at all practicable, was an old salt-house that stood on Market Street, which crossed a side of the Square, and was about five or six hundred feet distant from the "Branch Bank of Tennessee" [I think that was the title] which then stood at one of the corners of the public square. This old house, which we were compelled to take, had been used for storing salt, and had become almost entirely salinous. The floor was perfectly saturated with salt, which made it always appear wet. It had the effect to make the place look cool ; and in effect I really believe it was so. We employed carpenters to erect a stage for us, and seats or benches in the amphitheatre order — one raised a little above the other, from the orchestra to the back of the building. These seats were covered with green baize, and were reached by means of an inclined platform. There certainly was no great elegance attached to the interior or exterior of this "Temple of the Muses ;" nevertheless the *elite* of Nashville seemed to enjoy themselves as much in it as they ever did, according to my observation, in a more ornate building. The very finest ladies of the city would sit out a long five-act comedy or tragedy on a narrow board not more than ten inches wide, without any support for their backs, and appear delighted with the performance ; but then they had not been corrupted with *fast times*, sensational dramas, and easy, cushioned chairs.

CHAPTER XI.

First Performance in Nashville—The Season closes in three Weeks—Company must be enlarged—Ludlow and Phillips start for Cincinnati—Find Recruits—Bad Condition of Theatricals in that City—Author plays for Mr. Turner's Benefit—Account of the first Acting in Cincinnati—Ludlow and Phillips start for Nashville—Arrival in Nashville—Author marries, September, 1817—Opening of the Fall Season—A Comic Incident—"What will Mrs. Grundy say?"—Preparations for proceeding to New Orleans—New Arrangements with the Company—Ludlow, Vaughn, and Morgan become the Managers.

WE were desirous of opening our theatre at Nashville on the 4th of July, but could not succeed in it; we, however, commenced the *first season-performance* of a regularly organized dramatic company in that city about the 10th of July, 1817. Our opening play was Cherry's five-act comedy of the "*Soldier's Daughter*," with the following cast of characters: *Governor Heartall*, Mr. Phillips; *Frank Heartall*, Ludlow; *Malfort, Jr.*, Vaughan, *Ferret*, H. Vaughan; *Timothy*, Bainbridge; *Widow Cheerly*, Mrs. Vaughan; *Mrs. Malfort*, Miss Wallace, the latter being the professional name assumed by my "intended" when we started forth on our adventure. As she expected, and did, change her name within a short time, Miss Wallace was as good as any other name to play under. The farce of the night was the "*Village Lawyer*;" *Old Snarl*, Ludlow; *Scout*, Vaughan; *Sheepface*, Bainbridge; *Mittimus*, Phillips; *Mrs. Scout*, Mrs. Vaughan; *Nancy*, Miss Wallace.

This being the first acting done by regular professionals in the city, was of course well received and greatly applauded. The audience went away delighted; and the two newspapers—the only ones in the city—gave us most encouraging notices the next day, praising highly the acting and the arrangements of the *theatre*! On the second night we gave them the tragedy of the "*Gamester*:" *Beverly*, Mr. Vaughan; *Stukely*, Phillips; *Lewson*, Ludlow; *Jarvis*, H. Vaughan; *Servant*, Bainbridge; *Mrs. Beverly*, Mrs. Vaughan; *Charlotte*, Miss Wallace; and concluded with the celebrated farce, by the witty Sam Foote, entitled the "*Liar*:" *Young Wilding*, Ludlow; *Old Wilding*, Phillips; *Sir James Elliott*, Vaughan; *Papillion*, H. Vaughan; *Servant*, Bainbridge; *Miss Grantham*, Mrs. Vaughan; *Miss Godfrey*, Miss Wallace. The character of *Kitty* was cut out of the piece, and by an alteration of the language, made by myself, *Miss Grantham* assumed the situation

and spoke the language of *Kitty*, and under that assumption appears as *Miss Lydia Sybthorp*, a lady to whom *Young Wilding* has said he was married, and for which false representation it is determined to punish him by causing the supposed *Miss Sybthorp* to appear, and claim him as her husband. The farce was received with the strongest demonstrations of applause, and repeated afterwards for several nights. After a few more performances we came to the conclusion our success in this city might be reasonably calculated upon, and as we saw clearly that our stock of plays and farces, such as were within the capabilities of our small force, would soon become exhausted, we concluded to close the season while yet the business was good, under the pretext of hot weather, and some of us set out upon a recruiting expedition, for the purpose of procuring more actors, and other facilities for making an extended season in the fall. So, after having performed successfully for three weeks, we closed, promising the good citizens that we would reopen about the 1st of September with additions to our company.

It fell to the lot of Mr. Phillips and myself to go forth on this hunting expedition. Prior to my departure, I had an interview with the parents and family of my intended bride; and all matters having been satisfactorily settled for a marriage with the object of my regard, and having an understanding with her that, if possible, I would be back by the 1st of September to accomplish that desired result, I started on horseback for Cincinnati, with Mr. Phillips as my coadjutor. We made the journey in about seven days; riding early and late, stopping only two hours in the middle of the day, to feed our horses, eat our dinners, and rest a little.

We found in Cincinnati a small company performing under the management of Mr. Turner, familiarly known as "Billy Turner;" but owing to a long term of bad business he had not been able to pay the salaries of his actors, and consequently there was nothing but complaint and insubordination among them. Cincinnati, as far as I have known it, never has supported theatricals as it should have done. Here, at the date of which I am writing, was a city of at least eight thousand inhabitants, that could not or would not afford a proper encouragement to an intellectual amusement which in Lexington, Louisville, and Nashville (each of those towns not having half the above population), met with liberal encouragement. When the members of Mr. Turner's company learned that we were travelling to engage actors, we had in a few days nearly all the company applying to us. There were

four or five of them we supposed would answer our purpose, but we were somewhat scrupulous in regard to engaging them, lest we should be the means of breaking up Mr. Turner's company. This idea, however, was soon removed by that gentleman telling us it was his intention to disband his company at the end of the season there, and for himself, wife, and family to return to Philadelphia, from whence he had come when he embarked in Western management. We therefore had, as far as Mr. Turner had any claim to their services, his permission to engage whom we pleased.

They were taking "benefits" when we arrived, preparatory to bringing the season to a close. There was but one more benefit to come off, except Mrs. Turner's, and hers was to be the last night of the season. For her night Mr. Phillips and myself volunteered to give our services, if they would be acceptable to her. She expressed herself greatly obliged to us, and said she would accept them with pleasure. The play she selected for her benefit was Tobin's five-act comedy of the "Honeymoon;" Mr. Phillips to enact the *Duke of Aranza*, and myself *Rolando*. In the meantime we made arrangements with a Mr. Lucas, Mr. Thomas Morgan and wife, and a Mrs. Wilkins; also two or three young men for "general utility." Mr. Lucas was to play old men, as a general line; Mr. Morgan, the leading low comedy; Mrs. Morgan, the old women; and Mrs. Wilkins, any thing.

When Mrs. Turner's benefit came on the house was full, and it was said many paid for tickets who could not get in the small, ill-contrived place they called a theatre. This building, erected for some other purpose than a theatre, stood at the top of a high bank of earth, on the east side of Main Street, I think, not far above Fourth, and was approached by a long flight of rough plank steps, up which an audience had to ascend and descend, at the imminent peril of their limbs and life. Mrs. Turner performed the character of *Juliana*, in the "Honeymoon," very cleverly. She was easy and lady-like in her deportment on the stage, and showed considerable professional culture. Mr. Turner was not an actor, — only the manager of actors, — and was, I believe, prior to embarking in theatricals, a book-binder, or a printer; but his great individual excellence, I was told, consisted in being thoroughly acquainted with the best method of cooking *canvas-backed ducks*.

An old resident of Cincinnati, of the name of Cist, I remember, stated in a paper published in that city by him in 1847, that the first *theatre* opened there was on the first day of

October, 1801. It was a frame building, and stood on Front, east of Ludlow Street, on the site of what was (in 1847) known as Bailie's bakery. Mr. Turner came to Cincinnati with a few actors as early as 1815, and occupied a temporary theatre erected by some amateurs. About the first company he was enabled to collect there consisted of Mr. Joshua Collins, Thomas Caulfield, Thomas Morgan, Thomas Jefferson, William Anderson, Robert Laidly, A. Cargill, Lucas Beale, Mrs. Turner, Mrs. Barrett (mother of George Barrett), and Mrs. Milner. Mr. Caulfield died at Cincinnati, April, 1815. During Mr. Turner's season of 1815-16, an Englishman, of the name of Garner, a vocalist, came and played a few nights in some old English operas, such as the "Devil's Bridge," "Rosina," "Quaker," "Paul and Virginia," and others.

The Cincinnati theatricals for that season terminated with Mrs. Turner's benefit, and in a few days after we engaged the owner of a flat-boat going to the "Falls" to take us all—men, women, horses, and baggage—down the river to Louisville. From there we purposed to transport to Nashville by land such of the company as we had engaged at Cincinnati, Mr. Phillips and I intending to go forward on horseback from Louisville. After being on this "broad-horn" forty-eight hours, moving at the rate of about three or four miles an hour, I began to be impatient, and my mind would wander away toward Nashville and the dark-eyed widow I had left there. So when we had reached the mouth of the Kentucky River, about seventy miles from Louisville, I determined I would rather trust to "Mrs. Snarl's" movements than those of the boat, and so told my *confrère*, Mr. Phillips, I was determined to land and take to the road. I found him quite as willing to change the means of travel as I was; so out we got at the mouth of the river, afterwards called Port William.

It being about sundown, we concluded to put up there for the night and make an early start the next morning. The others proceeded on the boat to Louisville, where we were to wait for them, and procure the best means of conveyance we could from there to Nashville. Early the following morning we were in our saddles, having breakfasted by candle-light. The road was rough for twenty or thirty miles; after that, pretty good, and "Mrs. Snarl" availed herself of this "vantage-ground," for she paced off the miles so rapidly that my friend was left trotting along the road quite alone, and at times out of sight; then I and my mare would take a breathing-spell until he came up. At twelve, mid-day, we stopped for dinner and to feed our horses; rested till two, and started again,

making the town of Louisville about nine at night. We put up at the hotel of my good old friend Richard Taylor, and I almost thought myself a "prodigal son," there was so much rejoicing among the family at my return. After a good supper and a delicious night's rest, we rose the next morning and partook of a good old-fashioned Kentucky breakfast, which means every thing good, and then went to look after our horses. We found Mr. Phillips's animal quite "knocked up," stiff as a poker in all his legs; but "Mrs. Snarl" was as bright as a new button, and when she heard my voice she turned her head, rolled her clear bright eyes around at me and whinnied, as much as to say "good morning."

My friend soon found he had to get another animal if he rode to Nashville in company with me, and by the next morning after he had traded away his lamed horse, and obtained another apparently able to carry him through the remainder of his journey. In the course of our second day in Louisville, the flat-boat arrived with our new recruits; we had engaged a wagon for the baggage, and a lighter one for the living freight; and all started for Nashville direct at sunrise the morning following. My impatience would not allow me to travel as slowly as the wagons, so I rushed ahead, and my friend Phillips, with his fresh horse, contrived to keep in sight of me most of the time. We two reached Nashville on the evening of the fourth day from our start, and found our friends all well; there were several smiling faces to be seen around the Bell Tavern that night.

Having arranged every thing satisfactorily for our opening of the theatre again, and added to our orchestra two or three musicians, nothing remained for me to do until the new additions to our company arrived, but to get married.

So on the first day of September, 1817, the Rev. Dr. Hume, president of "Cumberland College," Nashville, joined in the holy bands of wedlock Noah M. Ludlow and Mary Squires, *née* Maury. Two days after the wagons arrived, and our new recruits joined us. Mr. Lucas and Mr. and Mrs. Morgan were to be co-sharers, the others were on salary.

We recommenced our season in Nashville in high spirits. Our two lady novices, Mrs. Vaughan and Mrs. Ludlow (Wallace no more), had both improved in their acting; and Mr. Lucas, Mr. and Mrs. Morgan, and Mrs. Wilkins were very valuable additions; these, with others, made our company efficient, and quite respectable in point of talent. Our re-opening was with Colman's comedy of "Speed the Plough," cast as follows: *Sir Philip Blandford*, Mr. J. Vaughan; *Sir*

Abel Handy, Mr. Lucas ; *Bob Handy*, Ludlow ; *Farmer Ashfield*, Morgan ; *Morrington*, H. Vaughan ; *Henry*, Phillips ; *Gerald*, Bainbridge ; *Lady Handy*, Mrs. Wilkins ; *Miss Blandford*, Mrs. Vaughan ; *Susan Ashfield*, Mrs. Ludlow ; *Dame Ashfield*, Mrs. Morgan ; concluding with the farce of a "Day after the Wedding ;" *Colonel Freelove*, Mr. Ludlow ; *Lord Rivers*, Mr. Phillips ; *James Davis*, Mr. Lucas ; *Lady Elizabeth Freelove*, Mrs. Vaughan ; *Mrs. Davis*, Mrs. Morgan.

The new faces as well as the old ones were received with marked approbation, "and all went merry as a marriage bell." The newspaper rogues were pleased to be jolly the next day, for in an article on the theatre, after praising the company generally, they particularized in some cases. One of them said : "We thought Miss Wallace—we beg pardon, Mrs. Ludlow—seemed more than usually happy ; and in the scene where *Bob Handy* soliloquizes on the subject of redeeming his plighted word to *Susan Ashfield*, ending with some loving words, and she rushes into his arms, we thought we had never seen any thing more *natural*." Another one remarked that : "We admire the tact of Mr. Ludlow in selecting the 'Day after the Wedding' for his immediate appearance after marriage, and suppose it was done that his bride might understand what she would have to encounter should she at any time display as much temper as *Lady Elizabeth* exhibited."

An incident occurred during the performance of the comedy of "Speed the Plough," which produced considerable merriment among the audience. In the progress of the play, one of the characters, *Dame Ashfield*, frequently mentions a person who, like Saree Gamp's "Mrs. Arris" (Harris), in one of Dickens's novels, is never seen,—one "Mrs. Grundy," that in the *Dame's* opinion would seem to be a "rural oracle," for she often refers to her, by remarking, "What will Mrs. Grundy say?" Now it so happened that there was a family of that name living in Nashville at the time, Judge Felix Grundy and family, and Mrs. Grundy was a lady that mingled with the best society of that city, and was highly respected ; but, being a member of some church that prohibited its members visiting theatres, she was not present on the occasion ; so, whenever the name was mentioned, there was a general titter and a laugh throughout the whole audience. This, to the actors, was incomprehensible, until a friend explained the matter to us. Judge Grundy, after Martin Van Buren's election to the presidency, was made attorney-general of the United States. The expression, "What will Mrs. Grundy say?" soon

after became familiarly used by writers in newspapers, and others, to mean *public opinion*.

There was great interest taken in theatricals in Nashville, and almost all the families of respectability appeared often at our performances, which were given but four nights in each week, — Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.

As our season progressed, there was apparently an earnest desire to erect a properly constructed *theatre*, and I was called upon by one or two prominent citizens to suggest the best plan for one. I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of several gentlemen of position, who were anxious to have a building of the kind erected in Nashville, and that I should undertake the management of it. Some of the names I recollect, as Col. John H. Eaton, afterwards Gen. Eaton, secretary of war during Jackson's administration; Patrick H. Darby, Wilkins Tannhill, Thomas Yeatman, Mr. Berryhill, Messrs. James and Robert Woods and Lieut. Samuel Houston, afterwards Gen. Houston, and governor of Texas. They had some meetings on the subject, but, as I had then formed a determination to go to New Orleans the coming winter, with the view of trying the experiment of an English theatre in that city, it was decided to postpone further action on the subject until my return the following spring.

We had a very successful season in Nashville, terminating about the middle of October. During this short season I had learned there had never been a dramatic company speaking the English language in New Orleans, a city of considerable magnitude then, in comparison with any other watered by the great rivers of the West. I had written there to a Mr. Richard Jones, a scenic artist, whose acquaintance I had made in Pittsburg during the season I performed there in Mr. Drake's company, and learned from him that there was a small theatre in New Orleans that could be rented; and he gave it as his opinion that an American company would do very well there. The only dramatic performances that had been given in the city up to that time had been in the French language, and Americans were all anxious to have the drama in their own tongue. Mr. Jones's accounts were so favorable that I at once determined to try the experiment, if I could get the company to agree to go there. New Orleans in those days had a terrible name, — that of being the grave-yard of all Americans who had the temerity to venture there. To make my arguments less effective, there had just been a very sickly season, and every mail brought doleful accounts of the ravages made by yellow fever. Therefore, when I made my

wishes known to the company, I found but two of the male members to entertain my propositions with any favor; these two were Mr. John Vaughan and Mr. Thomas Morgan. The latter had performed for two or three years in the English West India Islands, and was, as he said, "invulnerable to yellow fever." Mr. Vaughan said he was always well in any place, and had no apprehensions of the climate of New Orleans. But Mr. Phillips declared positively, he would not go. Mr. Lucas was opposed to going, but as he and Mr. Morgan were bosom friends, through the latter's persuasion he was finally brought over to agree to go; but only on a fixed salary, as he had no faith in the ultimate profits of the venture. The ladies who had husbands were willing to go where their spouses would lead the way. As to Mrs. Wilkins, she said there was no way left for her but to go where the majority of the company went; but she was not a sharer.

By the time the Nashville season terminated, the matter settled down to this point: Messrs. Vaughan, Ludlow and Morgan, upon their own responsibility, were to take the company to New Orleans, and reap the profits or the losses; all the rest to be paid stipulated salaries. The only exception to this arrangement was Mr. Phillips, who still decided not to go to New Orleans, but would return to the city of New York. As soon as this business was settled, I set about procuring some means of getting to New Orleans the easiest and quickest way.

There were no steamboats then, that plied on the Cumberland River, and but two or three then on the Mississippi or its tributaries. A Capt. Young, whose acquaintance I had made at Nashville, and who had been an old keel-boat captain, was kind enough to aid me on this occasion, and through his means I purchased an old keel-boat for two hundred dollars, that had been condemned as not strong enough for heavy freighting, but was said to be all-sufficient for any purposes we should require of it. This boat we had divided off into rooms for such as needed them, with a large room in the centre of the boat for an eating-room and for baggage. In arranging the apartments of the boat for the different purposes required, and looking at the number of persons and amount of baggage to be put on board this "Noah's ark," a fact loomed up that caused me considerable disquietude, inasmuch as I knew it would be the source of much grief to my wife, and it was that I had no place wherein I could put mine and my wife's darling — "Mrs. Snarl." What was to be done? To take her on the boat was quite impossible! We had scarcely room

enough for the *two-legged* animals. To leave her behind and pay the keeping for six months would be too expensive for me; then her remaining inactive so long a time would likely be an injury to her, and hiring out would be no less than sure ruin. After several days of silent torture of mind, and having tried in vain to find a friend to whose tender mercies I might intrust her, I was finally compelled to impart to my wife the melancholly fact that "Mrs. Snarl" would have to be sold! This was heavy news to her, and I will not attempt to say the quantity of tears it cost. This, doubtless, will be thought a foolish weakness, by some persons; but if they could have witnessed as often as we did the wonderful intelligence of this animal, and her beauty, and known her many amiable qualities, they would, I think, have felt as we did. There appeared to be nothing, scarcely, that she could not do, except *talk*; language she understood, and would obey. I have spoken to her words she never heard from me before, and she appeared to comprehend and be governed by them. I used to talk to her as I would to a companion, and she seemed to understand me. On several occasions, after dismounting, having dropped the reins upon her neck and told her to go to the stable, I have called her back, when she had been fifteen or twenty yards from me, and she has deliberately returned, walking quietly back to her former position, and stopped there until I mounted, or gave her further orders. I sold her to Mr. Berryhill, of Nashville, for two hundred dollars. He sold her again, two months afterwards, for three hundred dollars, to a gentleman living in Maury County, Tennessee, and on my return from New Orleans, I was informed that the gentleman of Maury County had refused five hundred dollars for her. A few more words about "Mrs. Snarl," and I am done with her here. This beautiful animal, that would bring a thousand dollars in these days, I purchased one morning in the spring of 1817, in the streets of Louisville, Kentucky, at the tail of a farmer's wagon, for *forty-two dollars and a half*. She was then about five years old, and looked rough, showing harness-marks, the farmer telling me he had used her for ploughing; but I noticed her age and well-proportioned limbs, and the expression of her eyes pleased me.

CHAPTER XII.

Company embark for New Orleans on a Keel-boat — Inexperienced Navigators — New Madrid — Interesting Conversation with the “Oldest Inhabitant” — A Western “Sawyer” — Plum Point — River Pirates — Fears and Forbodings — Preparations for Battle — Safe Passage — Chickasaw Bluff — Memphis — Fort Pickering — Trade with an Indian — De Soto — Burial Place of De Soto and Pierre Laclede Liguist — The Voyagers on a Raft — Perilous Position — The Boat gets off, and Party safely together.

AFTER every thing was arranged for our departure, our goods and chattels put on board our boat, we took leave of many kind friends, and on a beautiful afternoon about the 20th of October, 1817, we bid farewell to the good people of Nashville and committed our lives and fortunes to the waters of the Cumberland, Ohio, and Mississippi Rivers. Before starting I was careful in getting from my river friend, Capt. Young, some general instructions for the successful progress of our voyage; such as to keep our boat as much as possible in the swiftest part of the current; also never to venture upon apparent “cut-offs” of the river, unless the current set strongest in that direction; and whenever we might wish to tie up at night, never to do so alongside of a falling bank, or near tall timber, lest the bank should cave in, as it does frequently on the Mississippi River, and the falling trees crush our boat.

The first matter of importance with us was to determine who should take command of the boat for the voyage; and next, to establish rules and regulations for our comfort, and insure unity of action in our means of getting through the voyage safely and expeditiously. The situation was new to all of us; not an individual had ever been down those rivers before, nor was any one of us acquainted with the method of navigating the Western waters.

We — the three principals, Vaughan, Ludlow, and Morgan — discussed the matter, and settled we would elect our sturdy Lincolnshire musician to the high office of “commodore;” and by the joint voices of Vaughan and Mr. Morgan I was called to the position of captain. The names we both bore standing at that time very high in the marine history of our country had more to do, I imagine, with our election to these high (?) dignities than any superiority either of us possessed for the positions; Commodore Bainbridge and Captain Ludlow were names of note in those days. We descended the

Cumberland to where it flows into the Ohio River without meeting with any difficulties, except once getting aground crossing the Harpeth Shoals ; but we soon worked out of this, having only slightly touched the edge of a shelving rock under water, from which we soon extricated ourselves with the aid of the current, which was very strong just where we were. These shoals are difficult of navigation even to this day for persons not acquainted with the channel, at any time except that of a high stage of water. This river is narrow, and rises and falls very quickly ; but it is a beautiful watercourse, especially in the autumn and spring, presenting picturesque juttings of limestone, trees hung with vines of the wild grape, and green flowering creepers covering the rocks and the branches of the trees, some of the latter drooping almost within reach of a passing voyager. At the time we descended the Cumberland, about the latter part of October, some of the trees had begun to assume their autumn hues, passing into the "seared and yellow leaf ;" and nature in her wild robes clad was then quite beautiful, for she was dressed in primitive virgin purity.

We made no stop until we reached Smithland, at the mouth of the Cumberland ; it was then a village of about a half a dozen houses. Not obtaining here what we sought, we passed on, making our next landing at a place called America, in the State of Illinois, seven or ten miles above the place where Cairo now stands. After having purchased a saddle of venison, we started again. Whether America has any such name at the present day I am unable to say ; but I am of the opinion that it has passed away into the great receptacle of small things and small ideas called oblivion, swallowed up by the muddy monster a few miles below her. As to Cairo, it had no existence then, except that of a mud-bank ; being formed of the deposits of the Mississippi River, which, coming at that point in contact with the descending waters of the Ohio, causes an eddy, and thus in its whirlings casts the mud and the *débris* of both upon the nearest point of the Illinois shore. Thus has Cairo, a city of great importance, arisen from the contributions of two mighty rivers. It is undoubtedly easy to prophesy an event after it has transpired ; but in this case, in 1817, while gazing on the barren pile of mud accumulated on the Illinois shore, at the junction of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers, I said : "Some day there will be a great commercial city here ;" and it is so, and will be greater.

If the gentleman who purchased the site, and platted out the city of Chicago, had thought as I did, he never would

have disturbed "old man Bird" in his comfortable farm on the Missouri side, at the junction of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. He bought his land, and laid it out in sites for "public squares, parks, and streets" that have long since been washed away and carried over to increase the mud-bank on the Illinois shore, and extend the limits of the city of Cairo.

The first place we noticed after leaving the mouth of the Ohio was the "Iron Banks," a range of sharp bluffs on the Kentucky shore, about twenty miles below the mouth. A small distance below these banks there has since sprung up the thriving town of Columbus. Eighteen or twenty miles below we come to what is called "Mills's Point," where some very picturesque hills arise on the Kentucky shore, and slope down towards the river. At the landing was one log "shantee," a kind of warehouse for the deposit of corn, to be ready for transportation down the river; and on the top of a hill was a log cabin in which the only family then there were living; of these persons we purchased some milk and eggs. This same spot is now the site of the pleasant and thriving town of Hickman. Our next landing was at New Madrid, seventy-five miles below the mouth of the Ohio River. Here we stopped about an hour; and I had an interesting conversation with one of the "oldest inhabitants." New Madrid, as most of the Western people know, was once a principal military post when this large portion of the West was tributary to the crown of Spain, and was the residence of their military and territorial governors. But a large portion of the New Madrid of those days had been turned "topsy-turvy" by the earthquakes of 1811, and disappeared beneath the water of the Mississippi River, taking with it the government house and others of less note, including that of my communicative friend, the "oldest inhabitant," who, with a very lugubrious face, pointed to a spot in the river where the house he was born in once stood; he was only able to designate the spot from the accidental circumstance of a "sawyer" having taken up a temporary sojourn there on its way to the Gulf of Mexico. For the information of such as may never have had the pleasure (?) of coming in contact with these "peculiar institutions" of the West, I will merely say that a Western "sawyer" is a huge monster called a tree! Many of these not infrequently make sudden departures for lands unknown *via* the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico; and after pursuing their course an indefinite number of miles, and having divested themselves of certain superfluous leaves and branches, they often suddenly stop to rest on some conveniently ar-

ranged submerged sand-bar, and modestly drooping their heads, with an outstretched limb endeavor to admonish all incautious boatmen not to run against and disturb them in their repose. My antediluvian colloquist gave me some very graphic descriptions of those earthly troubles, when people in and about New Madrid for a long time were afraid to go to sleep, lest they should be waked up by finding themselves, house, furniture, and all under water, or engulfed in some awful chasm. But for the last fifty years New Madrid has not been troubled with these exciting little incidents. For about a hundred miles after leaving New Madrid we met with no place of any note until we reached "Plum Point." This spot we had been taught to fear as dangerous to property and person, as it was said to be the grave-yard of many boats and not a few bodies. We had been led to consider it one of the most difficult points on the river to get past in safety, for more than one reason: first, the great number of "snags" and "sawyers" made it almost impossible for inexperienced persons to get through without damage to, or total loss of their boats; next, if they did get past the dangerous place without coming in contact with the "snags," they were likely to encounter gangs of river-thieves, who lurked in ambush around this point, ready to pounce upon the unwary and defenceless voyagers. Many was the tale we heard, as we progressed towards this point, of the robberies and murders that had been perpetrated there. We were told not to pass it alone, but to stop a few miles above until we could find other boats passing, and go on with them. There was a notorious fellow in the regions by the name of Murrell, who had a band of "river-pirates" at his command, and it was said they were always on the look-out for their prey. So, in accordance with these cautions, we stopped just before we came to the line of bars and "bugbears," near where the town of Osceola now is. Here we waited from four o'clock in the afternoon until eight the next morning; when, having no associate to go through with us, we decided to make this desperate run solitary and alone. Before starting we unpacked one of our boxes, from which we took a number of horsemen's sabres, that had seen service both in the real and the mimic field of battle; of these we had sufficient in number to arm every man and woman on board the boat, and with every nerve braced for the occasion, we determined to "do or die." Never was there before such true courage worked up into a fever heat, and *wasted*, since the days of Don Quixote. We passed quietly through this "hell-gate" without seeing so much as the ghost of any man to

interrupt our progress ; even the “snags” and “sawyers” seemed alarmed at our martial preparations ; or else disposed to be very civil, for they let us safely pass them, occasionally ducking their heads, as much as to say “Good morning ; pass on, we don’t want you.” However, we had hardly got over our fright when we drifted slowly near a flat-boat tied up at the bank, from which we were hailed, with a request to give them some provisions. They said they had been robbed just above by water-thieves, and some of their party had been badly beaten. We were a little shy of these men, thinking they only wanted to decoy us into the shore that they might rob *us*. So we told them we would put some provisions ashore for them just below, but that they must not attempt to come there till we had left, and that we would take the provisions away if we observed them moving towards us before we had pushed out from the shore. They told us we need not fear them, and thanked us for what we had promised. We did as we said we would, and left the provisions there, never to hear of them again.

After leaving Plum Point, about five or six miles below, we came to the first Chickasaw bluff. These bluffs, four in number, we found at intervals of fifteen, twenty, and forty-five miles, on the eastern bank of the river, the intervening land being generally low. They are ordinary bluffs, from fifteen to thirty feet above high-water range, and took their name from a tribe of Indians that occupied a region of country back of them ; but with other tribes, the Chickasaws, during the first quarter of the present century, were removed by the United States government to the west side of the Mississippi River. About fifty miles further down we came to the fourth Chickasaw bluff. Just at the upper end of this bluff Wolf River, an unnavigable stream, enters the Mississippi. Immediately below Wolf River commences the fourth Chickasaw bluff, being the highest of the range, and stretches down southwardly on a plane of nearly three miles extent. At the commencement, or upper end of the bluff, is at present the city of Memphis.

When I first beheld this beautiful site for a city there was not a building, hut, or habitation of any kind on it, — at least where the city is now built ; but about two miles below the mouth of Wolf River, near the southern end of the bluff, stood the remains of a block-house. This block-house was once a portion of the fortifications of Fort Pickering, and had been turned into a kind of trading-store, furnishing powder, shot, whiskey, and other destructives to the Indians, who came there to trade. We landed here, and purchased some venison

of an Indian waiting to make sale of a deer he had across his pony ; and we found him as sharp at a bargain as any of his white brethren.

After leaving Fort Pickering, we found the country on both sides of the river low, swampy, and any thing but pleasant, for about one hundred and seventy-five miles, when we reached Montgomery's Point, in the State of Arkansas, three or four miles above the mouth of White River. This point, like Plum Point, had a bad name in those days ; for it was said to be a rendezvous for robbers, murderers, gamblers, and horse-thieves. Having learned the character of the Point, we made it a point to "pass it by, on the other side," and keep on our course. This spot was then, and is now, the landing-place for goods and passengers going up or coming down White River, although the mouth of the river is four miles below, owing to the low land directly at the mouth being subject to overflows.

It was not far from this spot, on the eastern bank, that the celebrated Spanish adventurer, De Soto, first arrived in sight of the Mississippi River, after fighting his way through Indian tribes from where he landed, on the coast of Florida, in 1539, reaching the Mississippi after two years of hard struggling. From the east, De Soto crossed with his soldiers to the west bank of the river, and after wandering in the wilderness of what is now the State of Arkansas, as 'tis supposed, in search of gold ; opposed by and fighting the Indians all the time ; disappointed and disheartened, he finally returned to the Mississippi, where he was seized with a fever that terminated his life ; and his followers buried him on the bank of the river, about twenty miles below the mouth of the Arkansas. There is an extraordinary coincidence in the death and burial-place of this great Spanish soldier and adventurer, De Soto, and the no less great French merchant and explorer, Pierre Laclède Liguist. The latter, after having founded, in 1764, and laid out a plan for building St. Louis, and after residing there fourteen years, and witnessing its prosperity, while descending the Mississippi, on his way to New Orleans, was seized with a fever, and died in his *bateau*, June 20, 1778, and was buried on the west bank of the river, just below the mouth of the Arkansas. Not a stone has ever been raised to mark the graves where decayed the bodies of these two pioneers, military and civil, whose deeds have left great and imperishable impressions on the Valley of the Mississippi.

The Arkansas enters the Mississippi about sixteen miles below the mouth of White River. Just below the mouth of the Arkansas is the small town of Napoleon ; this is the landing-

place of the freights and passengers up and down the Arkansas River. The United States have a marine hospital here. About sixty miles below the Arkansas we saw for the first time *Spanish moss*, with which the trees were abundantly hung; this moss is to be found from here to the termination of the Mississippi River. These trees, apparently draped in mourning, had a depressing effect upon some of our party; but to me they had a wild and romantic look, suggesting, too, the abode of some religious order like the Druids of old. Just here commences also the cotton-growing lands, some of the finest in the world for the production of this important staple.

About two hours after leaving the mouth of the Arkansas, probably ten miles below, somewhere near where the town of Bolivia now is, a sudden gust of wind from the north-west struck us, and in spite of our efforts to keep our boat in the middle of the river, drove us into a bend on the eastern shore, and half the length of the boat upon a raft of drift logs that had collected in the bend just below a sand-bar. This was a fearful situation for us, quite unused to such dilemmas. We all got out on the raft and tried to shove our boat off, but found it impossible. We were quite at a loss what to do, and had serious fears of our boat breaking in two. And to make the situation worse, the shore was covered with water as far back as we could see, and from one to two feet in depth. We commenced at once to lighten our boat by removing to the raft such baggage as was easiest handled; but after having taken out at least half of the load, we found still our united strength could not launch the boat clear of the raft. At last, perplexed in the extreme, we began picking out the logs of the raft, one by one, and setting them adrift, until we thus, with long and hard work, got the boat free. We had previously removed our ladies and placed them on the body of a large tree that was lying on the shore, and affording a resting spot above the surrounding waters; for we were fearful the raft might, after awhile, separate, float off in small sections, and carry some of the helpless ones to a watery grave. As the boat was becoming by degrees free of the logs, we returned to her such baggage as we had removed, and at the moment she was sliding off into the river, which occurred rather sooner than we expected, all the men except the elder Vaughan jumped on board, telling those left behind that we would land below and come up in our small boat for them; when we were able to land we were at least two miles below the raft. Preparations were at once made to go back for our friends, and

in doing so we found that the oars of the skiff had been left on the raft, where they had been taken to prize out the logs that we sent adrift. We were then obliged to have recourse to the oars of the large boat; but these unfortunately were too long and too heavy to be handled conveniently in a skiff, so we had to saw them to the proper length, and then with a hatchet reduce them at the ends to a size that could be well grasped with the hand; but this *grasping*, like that of another kind, proved to be a very unhappy action in the conclusion, for after a long and desperate effort by which we reached our party, we found our hands worked up to a perfect blister, and our bodily strength nearly exhausted.

There was considerable rejoicing when we reached our friends, for after we had passed down the river out of their sight, they began to be apprehensive we should not be able to relieve them from their unpleasant situation before it became painfully oppressive. Mrs. Vaughan, who had a young child with her, was very much alarmed and unhappy, lest they might be left all night in that dreadful place, for before we came in sight of them the sun had sunk in the west; but my wife, who was not of so despairing a nature, cheered her up with the assurance that we would certainly find some means to relieve them before midnight, saying: "I know my husband well enough to feel assured he will never leave his newly married wife to be eaten by wolves and bears." We had a jolly skiff-load,—four women, a child, and four men. Fortunately it was not necessary to do any rowing, and Bainbridge, who sat in the stern with an oar, was able to steer the boat in such a way as to keep close to that shore to which our large boat was moored; and when we were near her, by putting the other oar on the starboard we brought the skiff alongside, and safely embarked all of us once more on our "keel-boat," in which we felt quite at home again.

CHAPTER XIII.

Walnut Hills — Vicksburg — Company reach Natchez — Find a Steamboat there — Amusing Interview with a Resident of Natchez — Company urged to remain and perform — First Dramatic Performance in Natchez — Capt. Lawrence — Great Ceremony of Starting the Steamer — The Company arrive at New Orleans — Theatre San Phillippe — Story of a "Rose" — Nathan Morse — Mr. McCarthy, Mayor of the City — Company commence the Season — First Dramatic Performance in the English Language.

AFTER our difficulties with the raft, we passed a pleasant night, had a good supper, sang some songs, smoked, and about ten o'clock "turned in;" all thankful that we were out of our difficulties so well. The next morning early we put out into the current again and progressed pleasantly, although there was nothing very cheering to the eye for a long distance; not until we came to the Walnut Hills, say for two hundred miles. There were then none of the points of interest that now are found in that long stretch of river; such places as Columbia, Greenville, Princeton, Providence, Tompkinsville, and others. Walnut Hills commence about two miles above where now the pleasant city of Vicksburg is situated; but this city was not then thought of. The Walnut Hills presented a beautiful appearance from the river, and were most cheering after the long stretch of low, flat, swampy country we had been passing for the previous fifty hours. On those hills, the continuation of which form the site of Vicksburg, there was then only one solitary log-cabin, and two or three very tall trees; the trees, I believe, are there still. Col. Neivitt Vick, who owned a large tract of land that embraced those "Hills," removed in 1824 (seven years after I passed there) to the present site of Vicksburg, and by his influence and energy, a city has arisen there. This city was for many years the home of S. S. Prentiss, one of the most brilliant wits and able lawyers of which the Southern States could boast.

About sixty-five miles below the Walnut Hills we came to Grand Gulf, then a place having but one or two houses, and being remarkable for nothing but its whirling waters, supposed to be caused by rocks in the bed of the river; these whirlpools were a terror to flat-boat men, who sometimes got into the "suck," and found a considerable deal of trouble in getting out of it. We had been warned to be careful in passing here; but, like many other things that are made objects of dread,

turned out no great affair after all. We landed and visited one of the houses, where we found very kind and pleasant people, who treated us very hospitably, offering us milk and other refreshments, and giving Mrs. Vaughan a bottle of milk for her child, at the same time refusing to accept of any requital. We made no other stops after leaving Grand Gulf until we reached Natchez, another stretch of the river of about sixty-five miles. We reached Natchez at dusk on or about the tenth of November, 1817, having been a little more than three weeks coming from Nashville. We came to at the bank, or bluff, a little above the present lower landing, where we remained quietly on board our boat for the night, having been informed before we left Nashville what kind of residents we might expect to encounter at Natchez-under-the-Hill, being such as it was safer to meet in daylight than after dark. We had an early breakfast, and Vaughan, Morgan, and I went up on the "hill" to see what kind of a place Natchez-on-the-Hill was; in doing so, we were not at a loss to discover what sort of people lived under the hill. But when we reached the bluff above, which was a steep ascent running parallel with the river, and about two hundred feet above it, we were delighted with the contrast. A beautiful plateau of grass stretched along the bluff for half a mile, and back from the river, bordered on the river side with a skirting of the China tree. There was a slight rise of the ground as you went back into the city. The population was then about three thousand, but most of them people of ample means, and some of great wealth. This city was founded in the early part of the year 1700, by the celebrated French navigator, D'Iberville, who at first called it Rosalie, in honor of the French Countess Pontchartrain; but after a fort was built there, in 1716, the name was changed to that of Natchez, in compliment to the powerful tribe of that name that occupied the surrounding country, whose most influential chief, "Great Sun," was a friend of the white man.

After taking a view of the city, and walking through some of its principal streets, we returned to our boat, quite pleased with the appearance of the place. We had found at the landing that extraordinary craft, in those days, called a "steamboat," the name of which was the *Orleans*, or the *New Orleans*, I do not remember which. She was running as a packet and freight boat between New Orleans and Natchez. We went on board of her and made some inquiries about the rate of passages and freight to New Orleans. Cabin passages were, I think, twenty dollars, but I do not remember the rate of

freight. While we were at dinner, and debating about selling our boat and taking the steamer, which left the next day, a gentleman came on board our boat, and after a few preliminary remarks, asked us whether we did not wish to sell our boat. We told him we believed we should continue our voyage on her. After noticing our baggage, and perhaps discovering something in a portion of it rather peculiar, he inquired what kind of freight we were loaded with, saying that perhaps we might find as good a market for it in Natchez as at New Orleans. There was a dead pause for a minute, no one speaking, when at last Morgan, who was fond of a joke, said our freight consisted of "live stock." "Indeed," said the gentleman. "Then I am sure this is the better market for you. What kind of 'live stock?'" To which Morgan replied, "Men, women, children, and dogs." "Well," said the gentleman, "we have *dogs* enough, and need no more, unless you have some good pointers." "We have no pointers," said Morgan, "but we have some excellent setters." "Well," said the gentleman, "how about your men,—are they field-hands or mechanics?" "Why," said Morgan, "I believe they are more used to the field than the workshop." "And your women," said the gentleman; "what can they do?" "They can sew pretty well, when they choose to do so," said Morgan. By this time a tittering laugh was getting up among the ladies, who were all seated with us at the table, and began to discover the mistake the gentleman was making. "You say they can sew pretty well, from which I infer they would only do for in-door work. Are they good-looking?" Morgan cast his eyes around at the ladies, who were ready to die with a smothered laugh, and said, very deliberately: "Well, yes; they are all pretty good-looking, *except one*"—and here he rolled his large eyes around at his wife, who sat on his right, and whose face was so homely it would have frightened a horse from his oats. This was too much. The sitters-round could stand it no longer. My wife was bouncing like an India-rubber ball, trying to keep down a laugh. There was a general roar of laughter. The gentleman stared, and did not know what to think of it. I observed this, and as soon as I could recover my equanimity and assume a serious face I said: "You must excuse us, sir; we are a company of comedians, on our way to New Orleans; and this gentleman with whom you have been conversing is our funny-man, and he will have his joke, if he dies for it." At this the gentleman burst out into a roar of laughter himself, and said: "Damme, if I didn't think you had a lot of niggers to sell!"

And then we all had a laugh again. We asked him to sit down and take a glass of wine with us, which he did, and observed that he still would persist in saying we could do better with our "live stock" in Natchez than we could at New Orleans. He then said they had a very nice little theatre standing up on the "bluff" (the upper part of the city), that had been built by subscription, and that a party of amateurs of their city had performed twice in it; that the citizens were anxious to have a company of "regulars" to come and perform there, and that we must not think of going past them without giving them a short season. He added, we could have the theatre, he was sure, on our *own terms*; for the people would be so much delighted to have us stop, that there would be no difficulty about terms. He also said that he would have a meeting of the "managing committee" that very night, lay the matter before them, and give us the result in the morning; leaving us with that avowed determination. We were anxious to get to New Orleans, that being our main object; still, we had a desire that New Orleans should get well rid of the yellow fever before we entered it, and as we had only stipulated that we would open there "on or before Christmas," we were not very unwilling to spend a short time in some other city. In the morning, after breakfast, the gentleman, whom we had then learned was a Col. Evans, came down to our boat, with two others, influential men, and said the people were eager to have us stop and perform; and, as an inducement for us to do so, they, the committee, for the stockholders, were instructed to offer us the use of the theatre free of charge. Col. Evans stated, further, that he would buy our boat for \$200, the sum I gave for it in Nashville. He wished it for the purpose of conveying cotton to New Orleans. This was about the middle of the week. The following Monday we had our bills out for the "Honeymoon," and farce of "Lying Valet." These bills, I think, were printed by "old father Marschalk," known so long and so honorably in Natchez. The first performance of any *regular dramatic company* was given by us in Natchez about the 15th of November, 1817. The site of the theatre was at the upper end of the "parade," in front of the city, not far from where the princely mansion of the Posthelwaite family was afterward erected. The theatre was small, — would not hold above five hundred people, — but they filled it every night, at \$1 a ticket, no half price.

On one or two occasions there were persons who paid to look in at the windows. They hired, on one occasion, a man with a wagon to drive up under one of the large windows,

and allow them to stand on it, to see the performance ; this they could in some measure accomplish, and hear a portion if not the whole of the language of the piece, as the windows had to be raised for ventilation, the weather being mild and the house densely packed. The sale of tickets had been stopped, but these men *insisted* upon buying tickets ; and when the door-keeper refused them admission, they had recourse to the above means, saying they had come some distance (from neighboring plantations), and they were determined to see a play. When we were through our fortnight, that we had promised them, they wouldn't listen to our going away ; we *must* stop at least another night, which finally we did, and then they seemed loath to part with us.

On the day we left Natchez for New Orleans, a number of gentlemen, who had been constant attendants during our short season, came down to the steamboat, as they said, appointed to wait on us, and obtain a promise we would stop there on our return up the river in the spring. This we agreed we would do. The boat was to leave at four p. m. We sat down to dinner on the steamer at three and after dinner the champagne flew around so that some of the gentlemen concluded they would go on with us to New Orleans ; some of them had their horses sent down to Fort Adams, where they went ashore, and some got out at Baton Rouge. The trip was a jolly one.

About the hour appointed to leave the city, the captain, whose name was Lawrence, rose from the table and said he was "about to loose his moorings," and that if there were any gentlemen who wished to go ashore, they had only about ten minutes left for that purpose. Remembering the old proverb about him who "tarrieth long at the wine-cup," I made an excuse that I wished to go on deck just to observe the manner of starting a steamer, then a novelty to me, and joined the captain ostensibly for that purpose, but really to get rid of drinking any more wine. This Capt. Lawrence, I understood, was a brother of the celebrated commander, of the same name, who fought the famous battle between the United States frigate Chesapeake and the English frigate Shannon, off Boston harbor, in 1813. This brother of the commodore had been in the United States service, I believe, as a midshipman, during the war of 1812-15 ; but left the navy after the war, and came South to take command of the steamer Orleans. It would have amused our present Western steamboat-captains very much to have observed the formality and vast importance there was attached to the getting a steamer out of port

and under headway in those days. At that early period of steamboat-building the main cabin was below decks, similar to our ocean steamers of to-day.

Capt. Lawrence ordered one of the servants to bring his "deck-jacket" and "speaking-trumpet," which having obtained, he went on deck, and after looking around to observe whether all was right, took his situation upon the roof of one of the side-wheels, and commenced giving his orders to the men through an elegant silver-plated speaking-trumpet. When travelling on the Mississippi in later years, on boats commanded by old Capt. Aleck Scott and Capt. J. C. Swon, who were never known to speak much going out or coming into port, but gave nearly all their orders by nods, and motions of the hands and arms, — which, by the way, is the course pursued by nearly all steamboat captains of the present day, — I have often thought how the pilots, mates, and other officers of to-day would smile and chuckle, should any of our captains now "come the speaking-trumpet over them." But, *tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis*. There is nothing fixed, or stable, either in situations or opinions.

"Men change with fortune, manners change with climes,
Tenets with books, and principles with times."

After dinner the tables were put out of the way, and an old "darkey" with a fiddle was brought into the cabin, who could play an old Virginia reel "to kill." It was not long before the floor was occupied with dancers, and among the ladies were some of ours. My wife was extravagantly fond of dancing, but for my own part I disliked it.

At Fort Adams, sixty miles below Natchez, we put ashore some three or four of our passengers, who wished us a hearty "God-speed," and we passed on. Fort Adams has never risen to be a place of much consequence; it is now only a landing-place for the business of Woodville, a small but pleasant town a few miles in the interior. Arising early the following morning, I found we were at Baton Rouge, about half-way between Natchez and New Orleans. It is situated on the east side of the river, on the last bluff, descending the river. The site is a beautiful one, rising gradually from the river to some forty or fifty feet above it. We found here an United States military post and barracks, on ground commanding a view of the river above and below for miles. Until recently, this city was for many years the seat of government for the State of Louisiana; but during the late civil war the State House, a magnificent building, was burned, — all but the walls,

which are still standing, a melancholy memento of the horrors of war. From Baton Rouge to New Orleans, we saw some of the most beautiful residences, for comfort and grandeur, in the whole Western or Southern country. The plantations were in a high state of cultivation, and the inhabitants, black as well as white, were contented and happy; but, "Ah! woe is me, seeing what I have seen; seeing what I see." The remainder of our voyage was a most novel and delightful one to all of our party. The grand plantations, all in a high state of cultivation; the princely mansions, surrounded with groves of orange trees, bearing golden fruit that contrasted beautifully with the rich green foliage; the quadrangular arrangement of the cottages around and contiguous to the "mansion" house, the latter forming one side of a square, altogether preserving a dignified and aristocratic appearance, that reminded me of the description I had read of the old English barons surrounded by their vassals. These cottages, circumjacent to the "mansion," were residences for the negroes; they were all neatly whitewashed, and adorned with honeysuckles, morning-glories, and other creepers. In the distant background might be seen the lofty and capacious sugar-house, conjointly forming a magnificent natural diorama, as we glided past them the remaining hundred and forty miles of our voyage. The morning following the day we left Baton Rouge, we found ourselves at the levee at New Orleans city, having arrived there during the night.

After getting our breakfast, Vaughan, Morgan, and I went on shore to attend to business, and to call on the proprietor of the theatre, "S. Philip." This gentleman's name was Coquet. He was a small, elderly man, who wore his hair powdered. He spoke but very little English, and that with the peculiar French accent. He seemed glad we had arrived, and received us with a great deal of politeness. The insufficiency of his knowledge of English, and ours of French, involved the necessity of an interpreter; for this cause he took us to an adjoining room (his office) that connected with the theatre and with his family residence, an adjoining house, and here introduced us to his daughter, a young and interesting lady of about twenty years of age. She spoke English as well as French fluently. Her name was Rose; she was very accomplished; spoke also Italian and Spanish, and was withal a good musician and clever artist. On becoming sufficiently acquainted with the lady, I obtained knowledge of a circumstance which invested her with a special interest in my eyes. I have said she was an artist, and I desire the reader to

remember her name was Rose. One day, showing me some specimens of her painting, she presented a likeness of her father; in his bosom, just over the heart, she had painted a fine double rose, secured there with a gold pin; in the centre of the rose she had painted a likeness of herself. The idea was so beautiful I was strongly tempted to kiss her, and I would have done so if our acquaintance had been of a little longer standing. In addition to all these accomplishments she was her father's business clerk, and his darling! But I am digressing.

After having adjusted some preliminary matters with the proprietor of the theatre, our next move was to see the mayor of the city, and obtain his permission to open the building for American dramatic performances. Some of the municipal laws were very peculiar then in that city. To accomplish this object with the greatest probable degree of success, my friend Richard Jones, the scenic artist, introduced me to Nathan Morse, Esq., a prominent lawyer then residing in New Orleans, who was said to have influence with the mayor of the city. I found Mr. Morse a gentleman who proved on further acquaintance to be a very warm friend. He willingly appointed an hour for us to wait upon the mayor, whom, at the appointed time, we found in his office. This gentleman's name was McCarthy or, as the French would have it, Macarté. He was an Irishman by birth, but a Frenchman by adoption and association. He received us with great politeness, and granted a permit to open the theatre when we pleased, making no conditions except punctuality in the time of raising our curtain for each performance. He added he would send for the service of the theatre two *gens d'armes* as a special police; but it should be no expense to us, the city ordinances providing for such cases. After leaving the mayor's office, Mr. Morse suggested the propriety of our sending his honor the compliment of a box, to be set apart and reserved for himself and party, whenever they chose to visit our theatre. This we did, and he honored us with his presence frequently. I found afterwards that there was a municipal law giving every mayor of the city *free entrance* to all places of public amusement.

Having obtained the mayor's permission, we advertised the theatre to open December 24, 1817, with Tobin's comedy, in five acts, of the "Honeymoon," and a farce called "The Hotel, or a Servant with Two Masters." The pieces were cast as follows: *Duke Aranza*, Mr. John Vaughan; *Rolando*, Ludlow; *Count Montalban*, Plummer; *Balthazar*, Lucas; *Jaques* (the Mock Duke), Mr. Morgan; *Lampedo* (the

starved Doctor), Mr. Henry Vaughan ; *Lopez*, Bainbridge ; *Campillo*, Jones ; *Juliana*, Mrs. J. Vaughan ; *Volante*, Mrs. Jones ; *Zamora*, Mrs. Ludlow ; *Hostess*, Mrs. Morgan. In the farce Mr. Morgan performed *Lazarillo* ; of the other characters, I have no recollection who played them. In the week preceding the night of opening, Mr. Jones was employed in making some improvements in the appearance of the interior of the theatre. The auditorium consisted of two tiers of boxes and a parquet, and would seat about seven hundred persons. The prices of admission were one dollar to all parts of the house for adults, and half-price for children. Nights of performance : Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. By the time of opening, Mr. Jones had been able to paint the front of the boxes and touch up the act-drop and the proscenium. We had a little upholstering done to the seats, and the appearance of the house was considerably improved. When the curtain rose there was a short poetic address spoken by myself, that had been written by a gentleman of New Orleans, connected with one of the newspapers of that day, a Frenchman, whose name I cannot now recollect ; and I regret that a copy of the verses, that I had kept for many years, is now lost. The house was crowded from bottom to top, half the audience being French, and many of them not understanding one word in a hundred that was spoken ; nevertheless the performance went off with great applause. Some few years before our arrival there had been performances in the French language, but none in English. During our season there were no French performances in the city, the theatre having been burned some months prior to our arrival. The theatre known afterwards as the "Orleans" was then about to be built, on Orleans Street, just back of the old cathedral, that fronts on what is now called Jackson Square. As much the larger portion of the population were French and Spanish, who had been used to dramatic performances on Sunday nights, and who had none now, we were strongly urged by them and their friends to open our theatre for Sunday night performances, urging as an argument to move us to this, that the French theatre had always found that night their most profitable one ; but no, we had not been used to any thing of that kind, and so we "stuck to our point, like a rusty weathercock."

CHAPTER XIV.

Aaron Phillips—James H. Caldwell—Camp Street Theatre—Energy and Enterprise of James H. Caldwell—Antagonism of French and Spanish Inhabitants—New Orleans in 1817—Assassination at Night in lonely Streets—Author stopped one Night—A Man robbed and tied to a Post—A decayed French Actor and his Wife—Romantic Adventures.

THE following year, after the arrival of this *the first American theatrical company in New Orleans*, the "New French Theatre" was completed, and opened in the fall of 1818, under the management of Mr. John Davis, who obtained from France a very excellent company of artists, and had a very profitable season. Mr. Davis, although having an English name, was a Frenchman in language and manners; born, I believe, in Louisiana, when it was a territory of France. The theatre that we occupied stood in St. Phillippi Street, and was in after years known as the "Washington Ball-Room." It was the same taken by Mr. James H. Caldwell, who came from Virginia to New Orleans in December, 1819, just two years after our arrival in the city. He opened the "St. Philip Theatre," January 7, 1820, with the comedy of the "Honey-moon," the same comedy we opened with, and the farce of "Three and Deuce."

I may state here, our performance Christmas Eve, 1817, was the *first representation* by a *regularly organized company* speaking the English language, that appeared in New Orleans, and the first that planted the standard of the Drama on the western bank of the Mississippi.

There have been many misstatements of this matter published, in various ways and by different men; some have been made through ignorance, some from sinister motives, and some because they hoped for favor or reward in the way of *money*. I therefore here record my statement on this point as a *fact* that is incontrovertible.

The fall of 1818 saw the French Theatre finished, so as to be opened with a company, as before stated, imported from France by Davis; but there were no dramatic performances in the English language in New Orleans for the season 1818—

19 ; myself and company not returning to that city, for reasons that will be given hereafter.

I will mention here, that prior to Mr. Caldwell's occupying the St. Philip Theatre, Mr. Aaron J. Phillips, who refused to go to New Orleans with us from Nashville, having heard of the success of our company in that city, and finding we did not return the following season, concluded to venture to that "grave-yard of Americans," as he and others called New Orleans, notwithstanding the discomforts of a sea-voyage and the horrors of yellow fever. So, during the summer of 1819, getting together the best company he could, — many of them, by-the-by, being novices, — he made arrangements with Mr. Davis to occupy his new theatre on the "off nights" of the French company, viz., Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturday ; the French playing Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays. About the middle of November, 1819, Mr. Phillips and company arrived at New Orleans, and immediately opened in the "Orleans" (French) Theatre. What their opening pieces were I am unable to state ; and from what I learned two years after, on my second visit to that city, their commencement was very far from flattering. Mr. Phillips, it was said, had heard that Mr. James H. Caldwell had it in contemplation to visit New Orleans, taking with him the company with which he had been acting and managing in some of the towns of Virginia ; and Phillips thought to forestall Mr. Caldwell, by taking the new and better theatre, and by that course deter him from the experiment. But in this calculation, it appears, he was mistaken ; he did not know the man. When Mr. Caldwell found he had been anticipated in the matter of the *new* theatre, he resolved to take the *old* one, depending on the superiority of his company for ultimate success. His nerve in this and many other undertakings carried him through successfully, as the sequel will show. Mr. Caldwell's company being much superior in point of talent to that of Mr. Phillips's, played the latter "down ;" and Mr. P. was glad to engage with Mr. C., the latter agreeing to employ the better portion of the former's company ; also, to take Mr. Phillips's contract off his hands, in which Mr. P. had involved himself with Mr. Davis, manager of the French theatre.

I mention these facts to correct many erroneous statements that have been published in regard to the period of Mr. Caldwell's first visit to New Orleans, and his proceedings on arriving there. He made a fortune, which he generously spent, like a spirited man, in adorning the city with the finest theatre that had then been built in the United States ; and like-

wise in lighting the city with gas, commencing the latter good work by lighting his own theatre, on Camp Street, which opened on the 14th of May, 1823, and continuing his exertions to add to the interest of New Orleans even to the day of his death. Mr. Caldwell had some faults, and who has not? But his worst enemy cannot with justice say he was not an enterprising, energetic, and public-spirited man.

After engaging Mr. Phillips and a portion of his company, and taking the French theatre, Mr. Caldwell played in both theatres for awhile, performing in the one on St. Philip Street on Tuesday and Thursday nights, the "Orleans" Theatre being occupied on those nights by the French company. As the latter theatre was a new one, the most convenient, and nearest the residences of the American population, it became the popular house. The St. Philip afterward scarcely paid to keep it open; therefore Mr. Caldwell closed it, paid the rent, gave it up at the end of his first season, and engaged the "Orleans" of Mr. Davis for four nights per week, for a term of three years, at a rental of \$100 a night, the lighting of the house being included in the rent. He closed his first season in New Orleans in April, 1820, and returned with his company to Petersburg, Virginia.

The third day after my arrival in New Orleans, an incident transpired that was as pleasant to me as it was unexpected. On walking up Bienville Street I heard my name called aloud from the opposite side, and looking up in that direction, saw my brother David standing at the door of a store. He beckoned and I crossed to him. It was a surprise to both, neither knowing till that moment that the other was within a thousand miles of him. He had been engaged in business in New Orleans for two years, and had just moved his family to that city. It was an unexpected pleasure to both of us. I had not seen or heard from him in five years. That night I visited his house, introducing my wife, and we passed many pleasant evenings together afterward.

The season progressed smoothly, but we soon found we were too far removed from the American population to have that benefit of their support as we should have had if we had been nearer Canal Street; for even at that early day, although there were scarcely any buildings above Canal Street, yet the Americans were congregating in its vicinity, and very soon after they had crossed the "Rubicon," and began to receive the upper trade at the first possible landing. The commercial products of the Western States and Territories were then brought to the city through the medium of "keel" and

“flat” boats almost entirely. There were not more than three or four steamboats then plying on the Mississippi River, and one of them went no higher than Natchez; this was the boat before named, called the Orleans. I have used the word “Rubicon” above, as significant of the condition of the population in New Orleans in 1817, inasmuch as it was considered venturing into an enemy’s country to attempt to transact business above the line of the present Canal Street. The old French and Spanish settlers, who composed much the largest portion of the population of New Orleans, intended and believed at that day the city would be confined within the space now known as Canal, Rampart, and Esplanade Streets, bounded by the river on the east. Even as late as 1850, some old Frenchmen would refuse to acknowledge that portion of the city above Canal Street as any thing but the “Suburb Saint Marie.”

In 1817, when I first visited New Orleans, I found a strong antagonistic feeling existing among the French and Spaniards towards any one speaking the English language. This feeling had its rise from different causes, and at different periods. Among the French it had existed from the day that Louisiana, or that portion *east* of the Mississippi, was ceded to England, by the treaty of Paris, February, 1763, at which time it was agreed between the great contracting parties that the Mississippi River was to be forever free to both powers. With the Spanish it arose from the time when Spain was put in possession, by France, of that portion of Louisiana *west* of the Mississippi, — say, about the year 1766. Some two years later one Morales, a Spanish intendant, assumed authority to refuse the English, or Americans (all English with him), to land their goods or products at New Orleans, on any conditions. But this was followed by results he did not anticipate, and the people of New Orleans were reduced nearly to starvation. He then modified his orders so as to admit flour, on a heavy duty; and then it must be shipped only on Spanish vessels. This came very near bringing an avalanche of Western men upon them, that would have swept the Spanish authority out of the city of New Orleans, and perhaps out of the country. The king of Spain, however, interfered in time to prevent such a catastrophe, and restored the free navigation of the Mississippi, with the right to land produce and goods at New Orleans free of any duty; and this remained so for the residue of the Spanish rule in Louisiana.

This antipathy to those who spoke the English language had been handed down from father to son, and existed to a great

degree in 1817. It was no uncommon occurrence for Americans to be assassinated and robbed at night in the streets of the city; therefore almost every person went armed. I was stopped one night about ten o'clock by a man I took to be a Spaniard, as I was passing with my wife from the residence of my brother, on Bienville Street, along Bourbon to St. Peter Street. My brother had told me never to allow my watch-chain to be seen in the streets at night; so I had put that out of sight, and started with a loaded pistol in the sleeve of my right arm. When about half-way home, a man advancing toward me stopped suddenly before me and asked the time of night. I told him I supposed about ten o'clock; when I noticed he looked down to see whether I pulled out a watch, worn in those days in a pocket of the pantaloons. As I did not draw out any watch, he paused, and scrutinizing my face with a scowl, seemed to doubt whether I had spoken truth. Finding the walk too narrow to pass him with my wife on my left arm, I put out my right hand and gently pressed him out of the way and passed on, keeping an eye on the look-out for him. It was not more than a minute or two when I heard his steps behind me. It was Sunday night, and Bourbon Street was nearly deserted. Being aware that he was approaching me, I dropped my pistol down into my hand and cocked it, determined to give him the contents of it if he did not halt at my command, and at a respectful distance from me; but by the time he had got within about ten paces of me, three men suddenly turned the corner of a cross-street near me. They were very merry, and singing, in English, "Old Grimes is dead." My pursuer suddenly took to his heels, and ran off in the opposite direction to that I was going. I have no doubt I should have had trouble with him, had not those men come to that corner as they did. This feeling of animosity existing among the French and Spanish inhabitants towards those speaking the English language was removed, in a degree, by the events of the war of 1812-15 with Great Britain, when many of the former, of the better class, were found fighting bravely in defence of New Orleans, side by side with Americans. It was at the close of this war that these people learned to discriminate between Englishmen and Americans, and a feeling arose toward the latter that caused each to respect the other more than they had done hitherto. Still, among the uninformed and lower classes of the early inhabitants, there was much of the old feeling of hostility existing in 1817-18; and this did not entirely disappear until the civil war of 1861. Then, one common interest of *all* the inhabitants seemed to create a

more friendly regard among those who hitherto had looked coldly and suspiciously upon others of their fellow-citizens.

The city of New Orleans, in 1817-18, although under strict and vigilant police regulations, was deficient in the number of its watchmen (or *gens d'armes*, as they were named), to cope with the villains who lurked in the least-frequented streets and by-places, especially at late hours of the night. As an instance of this, on one occasion, in the month of March, 1818, a young man of good address, and apparently a gentleman, was found by the night patrol, about four o'clock in the morning, tied to one of the posts that are used to secure vessels to the levee or wharf. He had been stripped of his clothing, his watch, jewelry, and things of most value, leaving him nothing but his undergarments, in which he was shivering from the effects of the night air and his exposed situation. He stated he had arrived only the day before in a vessel from New York, that was lying a short distance from where he was thus found, and where he had been attacked by two men, who came suddenly across from the sidewalk behind him, seized his arms, presented a pistol, and at the same time demanded, in broken English, his money. Being quite a stranger to the place, and unarmed, he said he thought it useless to resist them; so he gave them what little money he had with him. But this did not appear to meet their expectations, and they took his watch, breastpin, gold pencil-case, and finally concluded by stripping him of his clothes; and leaving him with his hands tied behind him, and secured to a post, they suddenly disappeared in the direction from whence they had come. He said he had been in the situation in which the patrol had found him, he thought, about two hours. I believe he was never able to find the robbers, or recover his lost clothing or jewelry. The *gens d'armes* saw him safely on board the vessel he designated, and on the way he related to them that he was a stranger in New Orleans; that the mate of the vessel, who had been there before, asked him whether he would not like to visit one of the quadroon ball-rooms with him; that they both went to one; were there separated by accident; that he became tired of it, and was returning alone to the ship, when he was thus assaulted and robbed. It is presumed it had one good effect, for he assured his rescuers that it was the last time he would be found abroad in the city after nightfall.

Toward the close of our season, about the beginning of April, 1818, Mons. Coquet came to me, with his usual interesting little translator, Mdle. Rose, and informed me that

a friend of his, a French actor, was desirous of performing a few nights with us, if there could be any thing arranged to suit his capacity. He had by some unlooked for-event been thrown out of a situation in the French theatre, as Mons. Coquet informed me; that the gentleman and his wife were cramped in their money matters; and his ultimate object was to present his name for a benefit, when he thought his friends would come forth to his aid. I consulted my co-mates on the subject, and the conclusion was submitted, through Mons. Coquet, to the French artist. An interview with him followed, when it was finally determined that the gentleman and his wife should appear in the pantomime of "*Don Juan*," the gentleman to furnish the orchestral music of the piece, and to share with us, after the expenses of the night being deducted, for *two* nights, and to have a third night as a benefit, at one-half the gross receipts.

Mr. Jones, the scenic artist, went to work at once to get up some special scenery for the pantomime, such as a "hell scene," and other indispensable things, as a pedestal and equestrian statue of *Don Guzman*, etc., all under the direction of the French actor. The pantomime was put into rehearsal immediately. As soon as the Frenchman commenced with the direction of the piece, we very clearly saw he was quite *au fait*; he enacted *Don Juan*, and his wife *Donna Anna*, the daughter of *Don Guzman*; but she was not present at the first rehearsal, nor did she come to the second. We then inquired whether madame was not coming to rehearsal the next day. To which he replied in the affirmative. But at the last rehearsal she still did not come, and on my interrogating him on the subject, he said madame was not well, but that she would be sure to be there at night; that she had frequently performed the part, and all would go right according to the business he had rehearsed for her. We had some forebodings of a disappointment, but after consulting Mons. Coquet we decided to rely upon the piece going on, that gentleman assuring us there would be no disappointment; that he knew the lady, had seen her perform the part, and that she was a very fine *artiste*. So the night came; a short comedy before the pantomime over; the stage all set, and the first call made for the commencement of the pantomime, when suddenly a strange lady walked into the green-room, with her face covered with a *black mask*, which hid her features from below her eyes to her chin, such as is usually worn by ladies in domino at a masquerade. She was tall and commanding in her bearing, fine hair and eyes, splendid bust, and beautifully rounded

figure ; but her *mouth and nose were concealed!* What could it mean? It was not suited to the character, that she should be thus screened. It was very mysterious. Various conjectures were set afloat as to the reason of this singular conduct. Some said she had an ugly mouth, and was ashamed to show it ; some, that she had a turn-up nose ; but our low comedian, Morgan, who had a very large nose, with something of the "Bardolph" about it, concluded that she intended to unmask when she came on in the scene with him, who played *Scaramonch*, and astonish the audience by showing a finer nose than his own. At the second bell, up rose the curtain, and the pantomime commenced. Presently on came the lady, and went through the business of the scene with exquisite grace and ease, but did not remove her mask ; and so through the whole pantomime, never at any moment disclosing more of her face than had been seen at the commencement. Both monsieur and madame got immense applause, and deserved it. I have never seen such truly *speaking* pantomime, if I may be allowed the term, except in the acting of Gabriel Ravel, the greatest artist in that way that the United States has yet seen. Another very singular circumstance, for a female, was that during the time she performed with us no one ever heard her speak a word, even to her husband ; from this some concluded she was dumb.

Monsieur's last scene, the "hell" scene, was terrific ! When the four fiends seized him, he had them hold him above their heads, while he, stiffening himself, lay upon his back, with a tremendous shower of real *fire-works* pouring their contents full upon his body and face. I inquired of him whether he did not get his face or his clothes burned? He replied : "Oh no, not much ; and I do not care so I produce de effect." On the benefit night his friends did not forget him ; the house was full.

These two French performers were Monsieur and Madame Duvallier. They had both, in their times, been popular performers on the dramatic stage of Paris, France.

The mystery of the mask was thus explained to me some time after by a French gentleman, Mons. Tabaré, of New Orleans. The lady had, in years long past, been afflicted with a loathsome disease (some say a cancer) by which she had lost her nose, and in part disfigured her mouth, and such was her mortification that she always wore a mask except when asleep. From having been a very beautiful woman, her face became a perfect fright, which compelled her to abandon her profession, and lead a life of almost entire seclusion. She had been

induced by *poverty* to make this unusual exhibition of herself, and all who knew compassionated her.

As this lady was a celebrity in her day, on both sides of the Atlantic, and as all of the immediate and most of those relatively concerned have passed away to "the house appointed for all living," there can be no harm, I trust, in relating, as an instance of dramatic history, the following little episode: She came from France to the United States toward the latter part of the last century, as Madame Placide, reputed wife of a Mons. Alexander Placide, a popular rope-dancer of that day, well known in Europe, and afterwards in the United States. He was at one time manager of the Charleston Theatre, and the father of the celebrated theatrical family of his name, with five members of which I have been personally acquainted; all of them are dead. But this lady was not the mother of the popular and well-known Placides that flourished in the United States about the middle of this century. The mother of this family was a Miss Wrighten, the daughter of the celebrated Mrs. Wrighten of the London stage, better known in the United States, in the early history of its drama, as Mrs. Pownall. But to return to the mysterious lady. As I have said, she came to America as Madame Placide. What I am about to relate I shall give as I received it in New Orleans, in the year 1822, from an old French actor, who had known all the parties, he said, and happened to be in the same theatre with the lady when a portion of this little history began. I do not vouch for the truth of it.

Sometime about the year 1791, Mr. Placide, who was very celebrated in England and France as a pantomime clown and rope-dancer, found this lady in Paris as a *danseuse* and Columbine of the pantomimes. She was young, beautiful, and very popular, and they formed an intimacy, or a marriage "*à la Française*." Mons. Du villier, who was an actor in one of the theatres of Paris, claimed to have a prior right to her affections. This led to circumstances not at all convenient or pleasant; so much so, that Mr. Placide, in order to get rid of the frequent little *contretemps* that arose, suddenly determined to visit America, just then becoming an object of interest in the eyes of European adventurers, and the lady thought it desirable to accompany him. They landed at New York city, and appeared at the old theatre, John Street, February 3, 1792. After a season there they went on to Baltimore, and from thence to Charleston, South Carolina. Here they performed in what was then called, I think, the "City Theatre," and managed by Mr. Solee. While they were performing in

this theatre, where they had been some weeks, Mons. Duvillier, having followed them to America, suddenly made his unexpected appearance in Charleston. There was confusion immediately. Duvillier resorted first to strategy and persuasion; he sought the lady privately, and endeavored to induce her to go off with him. This, from some cause, she at first refused to do. In the meantime, Placide, having been informed of Duvillier's presence in Charleston, wrote to him a note, wherein he stated that if he did not immediately leave the city, one of them would have to die! This so enraged Duvillier that he immediately went to a store, purchased two French rapiers, had their points sharpened, and went forth in search of Placide. He met him in the street as he was coming from the theatre, having the lady on his arm. Duvillier immediately confronted Placide, and presenting the hilts of the swords, told him to take his choice, and defend himself. The latter did so, and like a flash of lightning at it they went, in the most public street of Charleston. The lady screamed and fainted; the passers-by at once interfered, and the two were separated, Placide having received a stab in the side, but not a dangerous one. Two days after that, Duvillier and the lady were not to be found, and nothing was heard of them for many months, when they were both then known to be in New Orleans. For some reason Placide never pursued them; and not long after he married the pretty Miss Wroughten, the mother of the talented Placides.

CHAPTER XV.

The Season in New Orleans of 1817-18 — Company leave for Natchez — Author very ill there — Determines to leave for Tennessee — Ride through two Indian Nations, with his Wife, on Horse-back — A Sudden Recovery — O, Glorious Water! — The Journey restores his Health.

SOME few weeks prior to the close of our season, I was invited by Mr. Nathan Morse to dine with him at his residence, where I was introduced to Mrs. Morse, a very intellectual and animated lady. In a conversation with Mr. Morse, after dinner, he asked me what my intentions were for the future in regard to New Orleans, and whether I contemplated to return there with my company the ensuing winter. Taking these remarks of his to be mere casual ones, without any particular object in view, I answered him, rather indefinitely, that I had not yet made up my mind in regard to that matter. I told him the season had not been so highly remunerative, up to that time, as to cause us to determine positively that we would return the following winter; that we had talked of such as being desirable, but felt that, to do justice to the city and ourselves, we should require a larger and more efficient company than we had, and we were not sure we would be able to accomplish all that we wished in that way. I further remarked that the location of the theatre we were then occupying was very much against any one being able to make a very successful season there, and that I thought we should not return until we could get a theatre in a better situation, and one that would accommodate a larger audience than the St. Philip. To these remarks he replied by saying that the French theatre, then in process of rebuilding, on Orleans Street, would, he thought, be finished by the following winter; and he was of the opinion that Mr. Davis might be induced to rent it to us for such nights as it would otherwise be closed, in their system of performing but three nights of each week, viz., Sundays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. This would leave us four nights of each week,—quite as often as any manager in those days thought of opening his theatre to the public. He observed further, as a probable reason why Mr. Davis would make such an arrangement, was the advantages he could not fail to

see, over and above the rent, in the increase of persons that it would draw to his buildings connected with or adjoining the theatre, which were occupied for public balls, gambling-rooms, billiards, and drinking-saloons; for in that city, in those days, gambling was conducted in the most public manner, and participated in by persons who, in the present day, would lose their good standing in society if seen engaged in gambling at a public resort of gamblers. Such places and such occupations, it is pleasant to reflect, are not now permitted within the walls of theatres, and the frequenters and participants have been compelled by the improved conditions of public taste and morals to seek less obtrusive localities.

The reasons advanced by Mr. Morse to show the probability of our getting the French theatre appeared to be feasible, and I said as much to him. In conclusion, he remarked: "It in the course of the coming summer you can procure a company such as you think will justify you in taking the French theatre, let me know your wishes in the month of October ensuing, and I will undertake to negotiate for you with Mr. Davis, and give you the result in time to make such arrangements for your campaign as may seem to you expedient." In reply, I told him I could see but one obstacle, then, that was likely to interfere with my wishes, and that was a rather formidable one, — no less than the difficulty in procuring such a company as I thought the people of New Orleans would expect and would feel disposed to sustain. I had observed that the population of that city, although made up of persons from all parts of the world, consisted of such as had generally seen good acting, either in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, England, or France, and whose tastes, therefore, would require something above mediocre material to satisfy them. New Orleans was not like the small cities of the Western States and Territories, where the people were comparatively shut out from all such amusements, and seldom undertook the tedious journey of going to the Eastern cities, unless very urgent business required it of them; and the few that were thus compelled to go, seldom stopped there long.

The conversation between Mr. Morse and myself concluded by his remarking that "there was a very strong desire existing with several leading Americans in New Orleans to have the Drama in the English language established in the city; that they had been highly pleased with this initiation of it by our company, and hoped we would be able to establish it on a firm and respectable basis for years to come;" assuring me

at the same time that we might rely on countenance and support from the best Americans in the city.

Our season terminated about the middle of April, 1818, with "benefits" to all the company, many of which were well attended, especially those of Mr. J. Vaughan, leading tragedian; N. M. Ludlow, light comedian and juvenile tragedy; Thomas Morgan, principal low comedian; Mrs. J. Vaughan, leading lady; and Mrs. Ludlow, soubrette and comedy lady.

On closing up our books, at the end of the season, after having paid all the salaries and outstanding claims against us, we found an increase in our "treasury" of something over \$3,000, for a season of about fifteen weeks; this after each of the three partners had drawn an equal sum, sufficient to pay the current expenses of their families. This, although it would have been considered a small amount, in after years, to have been made in New Orleans in that length of time, appeared to us then no contemptible profit, and we felt every way pleased with the result.

Mr. Coquet was very anxious to make a lease with us for the next winter-season; but we declined, promising to advise him of our wishes in time, should we desire the house for another season.

We took a few days to visit our friends and bid them good-bye, for business was not done at that period on railroad speed. I waited on my old friend Coquet, who insisted upon my dining with him and his family, to which I yielded, and had a good dinner, and a kind "farewell" from his daughter Mdle. Rose, who looked more interesting than ever before; yet she was not such as many persons would have called beautiful, but there was such an unaffected appearance of goodness of heart, a desire to make every body happy around her, that one could scarcely fail of loving her. The last persons I visited were my brother and his wife and child. My heart felt heavy within me; it was ominous. Poor David! I never saw him again. He, with his wife and child, returned to the city of New York the following summer, his health being impaired, and shortly after he was buried. * * *

On one of the appointed days for the good steamer "Orleans" to leave for Natchez, we all embarked on her for that place, and bid farewell to the Crescent City,—which, by-the-by, had not then obtained this well-applied *sobriquet*. Nothing occurred on our passage up to Natchez that would prove interesting to the reader. We found Capt. Lawrence the same gentlemanly, liberal commander we had the pleasure of travelling

with on our downward trip. There was a dash of the gentleman-sailor about him which won the good will of all persons who embarked with him. I think we were about three days making the passage from port to port, stopping at a number of landings to take in and put out passengers and freight.

The good people of Natchez were in high glee when they found we had returned to give them another season there. We opened the theatre the second day after our arrival, I think, with the comedy of "Speed the Plough." The house was, as in the former short season there, crammed full, and continued so for almost every night during my stay, which was about five or six weeks. In this city, and at this time, I came the nearest to dying, I believe, that I ever did in the course of my long life. The disease came upon me without any apparrent cause, that I could see at the time; and after bringing me near to death's door, left me in a like mysterious manner. During the late years of my life I have thought, however, that my bodily sufferings then were produced in this way: My wife and I were occupying a room in a hotel where there were many boarders; consequently it very was noisy; there was no such thing as quiet. So one day, having a long part to study in a play, and but a short time to do it, I concluded I would walk out to the suburbs of the city, find a pleasant nook, and study till dinner-time. My wife went with me, she likewise having considerable study on hand. The day was fine, and we enjoyed our romantic studio, that overlooked the river as it swept by us at the foot of the bluffs, where, under the shade of a grand magnolia tree, we passed the day until late dinner-time. Having walked to and fro for some time, and becoming tired, we seated ourselves on the ground, and finished the remaining time of study in that situation. There had been a heavy rain the day before, and although we did not perceive it then, I have since been satisfied that there was a dampness in the turf beneath that gave us both colds, — my wife being only affected in the head, but myself in the throat. I thought nothing of it for two or three days, but then I had to send for a physician. He took me in hand, said the glands of my throat were very much inflamed, and began prescribing for me; but I got worse, instead of better, — so much so that I could swallow nothing but liquids, and these with great difficulty. In a week or ten days after the doctor commenced on me I could take nothing but a teaspoonful of boiled milk at a time, and swallowed that in the greatest pain. He physicked, blistered, and tormented me for two weeks, and I was still getting worse; and finally he told my wife he could do nothing

more for me. She was then very much alarmed. The doctor failed to come at his usual time, and this compelled her to tell me what he had said. She wished to have some other physician, but I told her I had enough of "doctoring," having swallowed, and used in other ways, drugs sufficient to have enabled one to set up an apothecary's shop. "What, then, did I wish to do?" I told her that "I wished to get back to Tennessee; I did not wish to die there, where I then was; I was longing for something cooling to drink, and I thought if I could get some of the spring water that I had drank at her father's house, it would make me well again." The idea took such possession of my mind that it haunted me in my dreams, and I would fancy myself stretched upon the greensward near that spring in Tennessee, and dipping the water out with the old gourd, when suddenly I would be awakened by the pain of trying to swallow the imaginery cooling draught. The fact was that my throat was burning with fever, and every portion swollen almost to choking me. Now, we had nothing but rain-water to drink at the hotel, and in fact all through the city. The weather was very warm; and the South, in those days, had not yet the blessing of *ice* conferred upon them by their Northern countrymen. How I longed for a cool drink of water! I felt an impulse to quit Natchez and go to Tennessee that no apparent obstacle could repress; but how was it to be accomplished? There were in those days not more than two or three steamboats on the Mississippi River that ran as high as the Cumberland River, where I should necessarily be compelled to disembark; and those were so constructed that in warm weather they were uncomfortably hot, their passengers' cabin being on the lower deck, and immediately behind the boilers, so that the heat of the furnaces was, by the current of air created by the motion of the boat, carried directly into the cabin. In a consultation with friends, this was decided as likely to prove an immediate danger to me, and therefore to be avoided. It was finally decided that a journey by land, on horseback, would be the best method for me to undertake the trip, if I *would* persist in going. This last plan was the suggestion of my young Kentucky friend, Plummer, who, being raised in the West, looked upon a journey of four hundred miles on horseback through a wilderness—for such was the one proposed for me—as merely a pleasant ride. The only fears he appeared to have were whether I had strength enough left to stand the journey, as I was very much reduced in flesh and had become very weak. This was talked of without my wife knowing of it. They then consulted me pri-

vately ; and having ascertained that I was willing to undertake the journey, through an Indian country, rather than die where I was, as I assured them I should if I remained much longer, they then called my wife into council with them. At first she seemed quite astounded with the idea ; but when I put the question directly to her, “ Would she ride on horseback with me four hundred miles, through the ‘Indian nations,’ to Tennessee ? ” she replied, promptly and firmly, “ Yes, husband, if *you* desire it, I will go anywhere and in any manner with you, if you think it will restore your health.” That settled the question, and it was determined that my friend Plummer should undertake without delay to purchase two horses, — one for me, the other, a lady’s horse, for my wife.

The first thing to be done after resolving on the journey was to arrange affairs with my copartners. This was soon adjusted ; the company were to continue performing in Natchez while it would pay them to do so, and allow me a certain weekly consideration for the use of my share of stock in trade. Should I not outlive the journey, my interest in the copartnership was to be estimated by disinterested persons, and the value, together with the accumulated hire of my interest, to be paid over to my widow on the arrival of the company at Nashville, the next point of their destination. In two days my friend Plummer had succeeded in buying horses that he thought would carry us safely through to Tennessee. The one for me was a pony of substantial make ; the one for my wife a large chestnut-colored horse of easy gait. My wife had collected together such things as we were told would be needed on the way ; such as a small coffe-pot, two tin-cups, sugar, ground coffee, salt, crackers, smoked tongue, and a few other essentials, with the addition of a hatchet to be used for chopping dry wood to make fires with ; for we were told we should have to camp out on some of the nights. Our stage clothes and our street apparel were packed in trunks, to be left and sent to Nashville by the first steamer bound up that would put them out at the mouth of the Cumberland River, with instructions to be forwarded to me at Nashville. We could take but a small amount of clothing with us, for we had no means but a pair of old-fashioned saddle-bags for each horse, and those must be filled in part with our provisions and our utensils for cooking. We took also four small blankets, two for each horse ; these were to be thrown across the backs of the animals under the saddles, serving to preserve their backs from “ wear and tear ” and for us to repose on at night, when necessary.

Having taken leave of our friends over night, preparatory to

an early start the next day, one beautiful morning, about sunrise, the beginning of June, 1818, our horses being at the door, we prepared to start. I was the first to be seated on horseback, but I had not strength to mount my horse alone. My good friend Plummer, who anticipated my situation, was just behind me. He had risen earlier than usual to see us off, and with his aid I contrived to get into my saddle; but it was an effort that exhausted what little strength I had been able to muster for the occasion. Plummer, poor fellow, almost choking when he shook my hand and said "farewell!" Alas! it was a "long farewell," for I never saw the noble-hearted young Kentuckian again.

The beauty of the morning, the freshness of the air, and the thought that I was on my way to Tennessee, for awhile seemed to give me revived strength, and we struck off out of town on a gentle trot; but this I soon found I could not stand. The pony was quick and short in his action, and the motion increased the pain of my throat; so that we soon settled down to a walk. But still the travel was painful to me; the animal my wife rode had a long stride, and ontravelled the pony on a walk; to make up for this, when the latter found the other horse ahead of him, he would suddenly start off on a brisk, jerking trot which was almost death to me. My wife tried to work her horse into a slow walk, but all in vain; he would either stand still or go ahead at his own gait. In this way, suffering most intensely, we reached the little town of Washington, about eight miles east of Natchez, when I told my wife I *must* stop, and that if I had to die, it might better be there than in the wilderness. She said all she could to soothe my mind, and we concluded to stop and rest awhile there and start again in the cool of the evening, for the sun had been very oppressive for the last hour. So we dismounted at the little village inn, where we were very kindly treated, and little comforts provided for us, *but no cold water*. They had what they called "fresh spring water," but it was warm; it was not what I wanted. In the course of an hour or so, the pain of my throat had subsided so as to allow me to fall into a slumber as I lay on a couch in the sitting-room of the hostelry. After a sleep of about an hour I awoke, feeling somewhat easier; and during the time I was asleep my wife had made some inquiries in regard to the road ahead on which we were to travel, ascertaining that there was a house of "accommodation for travellers" not many miles beyond, kept by a Mrs. Ferguson, where we could, if we wished, most likely procure supper and bed for the night. Dinner was announced.

but I could eat nothing. My wife had some milk boiled for me, but I was tired of that, so refused it. The fact was, the condition of my mind and body was such that, had it not been for the leaving of my wife in so unpleasant a situation, I felt as though I would have preferred to die just there, for the torture of my disease was increased by the distress of my mind. My wife sat down to dinner with the family, but made only a scanty meal. Late in the afternoon we concluded to start, and make an effort to reach the house of the Widow Ferguson. I was helped upon my horse, my wife upon hers, and we moved slowly off, the good people gazing after us till we passed quite out of their sight. As the sun was descending we reached the house for which we set out. We were received kindly by the hostess; and her two-story log house looked very clean and comfortable. There was a front porch to the house, with a bench across one end, and I sat myself down on this without entering the house. My wife inquired of the landlady whether she could give us a drink of cold water. To which she replied in the affirmative, and sent off a little negro boy with a bucket to the spring to fetch some. In about ten minutes the little "darkey" returned with a bucket on his head. He set it down on an end of the bench near me; it looked delicious, and there was an old gourd floating in the water; this reminded me of Tennessee and the old oaken bucket. I instantly seized the gourd and commenced swallowing the water, a few drops at a time; it was to me the nectar of the gods. While I was engaged in this refreshing work, three travellers rode up to the door and inquired whether they could be "accommodated for the night," and were told by the landlady they could. They immediately dismounted, and led their horses toward the stable-yard; but soon returned to the house, after having seen their horses provided for. They seemed plain, civil, and well behaved traders, and such they proved to be, who had descended the Mississippi as far as Natchez with a boat-load of horses and mules, had sold them, and were then returning to the West by land. Finding they were from Tennessee, my wife got into conversation with them, and they soon discovered they had many mutual acquaintances and friends; and in fact one of them, a Mr. White, claimed to be *related* to her; at all events they were both originally from old Virginia, and *of course* must be relatives. I never knew two Virginians to meet as strangers that they did not, before they separated, find they were kindred, if it was no nearer than that "my Uncle Carter paid his *addresses* to your Aunt Herndon when they were both young, and that, you know, makes us relations;"

a very satisfactory conclusion to them, but not very logical. This conversation, and much more similar to it, occurred while they were taking supper with the landlady on the front porch of the house, where they had the benefit of the cool evening breeze. As for myself, not being able to eat any thing, I employed the time, sitting on a bench near by, in bathing the interior of my throat, by painful effort, with delicious cold water dipped from the bucket in the old gourd; this I continued until about nine o'clock, when my wife and I retired to rest. Previous to our separation from the travellers for the night, it was understood that we should all take an early breakfast with Mrs. Ferguson, and if I should be able to travel, all start together, the gentlemen having volunteered to see us through to Tennessee. This was a source of much satisfaction to both my wife and myself, inasmuch as these men had travelled the road before, and were acquainted with the best stopping-places and camping-grounds. After getting into my bed I was soon asleep, for I was much fatigued with even the short ride we had made; and the pain of my throat had been much subdued by the cold water imbibed from the old gourd. That blessed old gourd! It was to me what Jonah's gourd was to him,—not only a comfort to my head, but a deliverer from my grief. I slept soundly through the night, for the first time in three weeks; and waking in the morning about daylight, found that I could *swallow without any pain*, which at first I could hardly realize; but on making repeated efforts, was convinced of its being a delightful reality. My wife waking at the same time, I told her what my feelings were, and we both rejoiced exceedingly. The fact was that the *cold water* I had taken before going to bed had produced a revolution in my physical system, and had enabled it to throw off the disease from which I had been suffering for three or four weeks; the inflammation of the throat had subsided, and I was comparatively a well man again, and all in one night. I have worshipped cold water ever since. We both rose as soon as it was fairly light, to prepare for starting; our hostess had been bustling about the house for some time, making preparations for the breakfast of her guests. Our new acquaintances were looking after their horses, to see they were fed before starting, and were kind enough to do as much for mine. My wife went down stairs to see about getting something that I would be able to eat for breakfast. I sat down by the window that looked out toward the east, and as the sun rose, I gazed upon its glorious splendor with a heart full of joy; and then and there—for the first time in all my life, I believe—

a prayer, that came from my inmost soul, went up in thankfulness to the Almighty disposer of human events, for the sudden and mysterious relief from bodily and mental anguish that I had just experienced.

There are, doubtless, persons in the world who may smile and scoff at this idea, saying "it was only the accidental application of a well-known remedial agent in local inflammation, and that the Almighty had nothing to do with it." It is not my object in these scribblings to discuss points of theology, but at that time I had no knowledge or thought of water as a curative of any of the ills of life; but there was within me an inward prompting (I will call it "spiritual"), that led me to believe that cold spring-water would save my life. I believe, with *Hamlet*, "there is a special Providence even in the fall of a sparrow." By-the-by, Shakespeare must have been a reader of the Bible, although he was a "*profane play-actor*."

Breakfast was soon announced; all assembled at the table, myself included, when every one seemed surprised at the sudden change in my appearance, and I ate, comparatively, a hearty meal. The change seemed like magic. During our repast I said to the gentlemen I would be ready to start with them, but I was much afraid I should not be able to keep up with them; that although the disease had left me, my strength had not returned to me, and it would be necessary, probably, for me to make but short rides for the first few days; and, therefore, when they felt we were a drag upon them, I hoped they would not hesitate about leaving us to proceed by ourselves. They said they did not wish to ride far or fast at the commencement of their daily stages; it was their custom not to push their horses at the beginning, lest they should give out before the end of the journey.

Breakfast over, and our bills paid, I took a final drink from the old wooden bucket, and having all mounted our steeds, we bade adieu to kind Mrs. Ferguson, with blessings on her and her old gourd.

CHAPTER XVI.

Indian Log-cabin — Breakfast in the Woods — Camp at Night — Horse missing — Indian rascality — An Indian Council of Chiefs — A Smoke all around — Mr. Bland turns up unexpectedly — Drunken Indians — “Whiskey too much” — Party arrive at Frankfort — Author settles down in Nashville — Becomes Stage-manager of Amateur Theatricals — Eminent Performers — Funny Affair — Gen. Sam Houston insists on being a Tragedian — Short Career of Amateurs.

THE morning we left the Widow Ferguson's house, the sky was clear and bright, and I did not find the heat as oppressive as I had on the previous day; my strength held out better than any one had expected. This enabled me to make a ride of thirty miles between sunrise and sundown, and to lay by three hours during the hot part of the day. As the sun went down we found ourselves at the door of a log cabin, the inmates of which were a mixed breed, — the father being white, the mother Indian. Here we concluded to stop for the night, although appearances were any thing but inviting. There were only two rooms, in a corner of each of which was a kind of rough bedstead, known in the West by the name of “bunk,” on which were first thrown some corn-shucks, and over these a bear-skin or two, without either sheets or pillows. The “squaw” provided us with a supper quite as good as we could expect to find in such quarters. The coffee was tolerable; sugar, but no milk; fried chicken, middling of bacon, and fried eggs. Being hungry, I ate pretty freely, and retired early. The back room was given to my wife and myself, the front room to our fellow-travellers, one of whom stretched himself on the floor, with his saddle-bags for a pillow. Where the host and his wife and children slept I know not, but suppose it must have been in an out-house, used as a barn. Being very tired, we soon forgot where we were, and slept as soundly as we could have done in the best hotel in Natchez, until we were through our first nap, about two o'clock in the morning, when I was thoroughly awakened by my wife rising. I asked her what was the matter. “Matter?” said she. “Get up, or you will be carried away very soon, bodily;” and commenced shaking her night-clothes. Suffice it to say, we had more companions than we anticipated, and so persevering in their attentions that they would not allow us to sleep any more that night.

As soon as daylight appeared we dressed, and finding our friends up, who had not slept any better than we, except the one who had taken to the floor, we concluded to start without stopping for breakfast; so paid for our supper, lodgings, and horse-feed, and departed. We rode about ten miles, when we came to a clear stream of water that crossed the road, having the appearance of issuing from a spring near at hand. Here we concluded to stop and have our breakfast, my wife proposing to become hostess for the occasion. On following up this stream it was found to come from a spring about a hundred yards from the road, where the water was bubbling up through the earth, clear and cool; so we dismounted, unpacked our saddle-bags, each contributing something, and my wife commenced the work of preparing our morning repast. Mr. White assisted her by getting together some dry wood and making a fire. She soon had the coffee boiling, which, when taken off the fire, Mr. W. "settled" by dropping into it a few pieces of the skin of dry codfish that he had with him. I will do my wife the justice to say, I never sat down to a breakfast that I enjoyed more, and our companions seemed quite as highly gratified as myself. In that day's ride we made nearly forty miles, my strength sustaining me better than the day before. At night we stopped at a log cabin where the owners were all Indians. We found the cabin already taken possession of by some gentlemen from Tennessee, who were riding through the country examining lands; for the question of removing the Indians to the other side of the Mississippi River was even then being agitated by the government of the United States. As there were no accommodations for us at this place, we decided to go on till we could find water for our horses, and then camp out for the night; this we met with in something less than a mile from where we had stopped, and here we concluded to remain for the night. My wife went to work again to get supper for the party, which she soon accomplished. Our friends "hobbled" our horses — that is, tied their feet in such a manner that they could not go far away — and coupled them together in pairs, excepting the horse my wife rode, which they said would keep with the others, and thus prepared, turned them loose to graze for the night. Supper being over, we chatted awhile, and then my wife prepared our bed. We selected a spot near our camp-fire; the others went a little way off from us. I never had a more refreshing sleep in my whole life.

We did not wake till it was broad daylight; we found our friends up, who had been hunting for our horses, and they had

found all except one, which was the horse my wife had been riding. They said they had searched for a half mile round, in all directions, and had not yet been able to find him. Here was a perplexing situation for me! What should we do, could the horse not be found? Perhaps be left behind by our companions, whose company was quite a convenience as well as a pleasure to us; and then we might not be able to purchase another horse from the Indians, who, as far as we had been able to discover, had few if any to spare.

While we were meditating on this trouble, and one of the party had volunteered to mount his own horse and make another and a wider search, we observed an Indian about two hundred yards from us skulking among the undergrowth. Mr. White said at once: "That fellow knows where the horse is, I'll bet my life. He has stolen and hid the animal, in hopes of getting a reward for finding him, or, failing in that, of keeping him. Call him, and offer him a dollar, and he will find your horse." This I did instantly, and as he came to us Mr. White took a silver dollar that I handed him, showed it to the Indian, and explained to him in pantomime what he wished; when the fellow nodded that he understood, grunted, "Umph! Yow!" and started off into the woods in the direction he had come, and in ten minutes came to us leading the horse. I gave him the silver dollar; he examined it a few moments, looked at me, and nodded again, saying, "Umph! good man — me — Injun," and walked off. Mr. White (*sotto voce*), "Good man? You d—d rascal! if you had your due, you would have a halter round your neck." I felt quite relieved in mind when I got possession of my horse again.

We had breakfast here before starting, and a little after sunrise were on our way again. That day we made a ride of about forty miles, — my strength still improving, — and stopped at night at an Indian cabin, where they could give us no supper, but offered us the hospitality of their house, such as it was; when we found they could let us have corn for our horses, we concluded to rest there for the night. My wife arranged a little supper from our own stores, which we all relished very much, especially the coffee, which was very good. We slept soundly on the floor. In the morning we had some coffee and a lunch, and started about sunrise. It was a beautiful day, not very hot. We had to ride fast, wishing to make a certain house before night, at which resided one of the chief men of that tribe of Indians, the Choctaws, distant over forty miles from where we rested the previous night.

We reached our destination just before sundown. On riding

up to the door, we found on the front porch of a long two-story double log-cabin some eight or ten sage-looking old Indian chiefs assembled in council. The man of the house, who was a half-breed, and who spoke good English, rose to meet us, and desired we would alight from our horses and come into the house. We did so, and told him we would like to stop there for the night, but judging from appearances, we feared his house was already filled. He said by no means; the persons we saw on the porch would all leave for their own homes in the course of an hour, and that he would furnish supper and beds for us if we wished to stay. He seemed a very intelligent man, and one who had been used to the society of white men. He remarked, in the course of conversation, that those old men on the porch were leading men of the nation, and that they were in council about disposing of their lands; inviting us at the same time to come out on the porch and take a seat. We did so; my wife in the interim looking about the accommodations for the night. When we came out on the porch the chiefs all arose and nodded their heads; our host said something to them in the Indian tongue; then desired us to be seated. When we had sat down they all resumed their seats again on the benches, which were arranged so as to constitute three sides of a quadrangle. There was a silent pause for a few minutes, when the oldest-looking chief passed a short "corn-cob" pipe he was smoking, to the next man on his right, who took a whiff or two at the pipe and passed it to the next on his right, and in this way it came presently to *my* turn to take the pipe. I took it in my hand, hesitating for two or three seconds what I should do with it, when one of our party next to me whispered, "Smoke, or they will be offended." With much reluctance I complied, and passed it to him; and in this way it went around, and around again, through the whole party, the chiefs continuing their talk and smoking. While I was thus seated, a man came out of the house upon the porch, whom, to my great surprise, I recognized as being Mr. Bland, he who joined Mr. Drake's company of actors at Pittsburg, leaving it suddenly and mysteriously, with his name in the bills to perform that night, as previously related. He gazed at me for a minute, as though trying to recollect where he had seen me; and as I arose from my seat, intending to advance and speak to him, he suddenly turned and walked into the house again. It appeared evident he wished to avoid a recognition by me; therefore I sat down again, and he did not present himself any more during the time we remained there. I came to the conclusion that for

some urgent reason he did not wish to have any inquiries made about him ; consequently I said nothing to our Indian host in regard to him. But this meeting, with what I have stated in a former chapter of the information gained from another source, has satisfied me that I did not mistake the man.

We had a good supper and tolerably comfortable beds at this place, for which our host refused to take any pay, saying he did not keep a house of entertainment, but was always pleased to be able to afford any of his " white brothers " who came that way such accommodations as his situation would allow him to do. So much for Indian hospitality. This chief, whose name I cannot now recollect, was a man of commanding appearance and dignified bearing ; and, as I learned afterwards, was very influential with his tribe, inducing them in after years to dispose of most of their land east of the Mississippi to the United States, and to remove to the west side, where the government offered them a larger extent of territory and better hunting-grounds.

At the time I made this journey, the summer of 1818, Mississippi had but recently been admitted into the Union as a State, and Alabama was yet a Territory ; still it was thought by the government to be a desirable measure that the three tribes of Indians—the Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Cherokees—should be induced to abandon their lands on the east of the Mississippi River for a much greater extent of country on the west side. This ultimately was effected by negotiation with those tribes. Shortly after, in 1819, Alabama became a member of the family of States.

But, to return to our journey. After an early breakfast we left the residence of our hospitable Indian friend, and rode about forty miles before stopping for the night. The day was beautiful, and nothing occurred worth mentioning, unless the following be considered such : After having ridden about ten miles, we were met by a white man on horseback, riding very fast, who stopped and told us to be on our guard, as on the road, in the direction we were going, were a number of drunken Indians ; that they had stopped a man and beaten him very severely ; and ended by advising us to leave the Indian trail and make a circuit of a few miles through the woods, and thus pass around and come back upon the trail beyond them.

After this man left us, we paused a few minutes to consult on what we should do. Mr. White said he did not like the man's looks ; he believed he was a rascal, and wished to guide us into a snare ; continuing his remarks by saying that he had heard

there were bands of robbers (white men) roaming in these wild regions, who occasionally stopped persons supposed to be traders returning West with money, the proceeds of their sales of horses and cattle made at Natchez or New Orleans, and that this fellow was only a "decoy-duck." After agitating the matter, *pro* and *con.*, for a few minutes, we decided to keep the regular road, or track. Our friends had fire-arms in their saddle-bags, a brace of pistols each; but for myself, I had no weapon of defence but the hatchet that was swung by a cord to the horn of my wife's saddle, on the off-side. It was quite handy to lay hold of at any moment, and I determined I would use it if obliged to. I owned a very fine pair of pistols, but they were where the Dutchman's anchor was when a storm came on, they were "at home;" or, in other words, they had been packed up in one of the trunks that had been left at Natchez, my wife not thinking that there would be any use for such things on the road, and I being too ill to think of any thing except how to get away. So we rode quietly along, each, I suppose, deciding in his mind some mode of defence. In the course of twenty or thirty minutes we came up abreast an Indian cabin that stood back from the road some forty or fifty yards, and there we saw three Indian men wild with drunkenness, and three or four squaws trying, apparently, to hold them, and keep them from coming towards us; in doing this, I was amused to see them trip up the heels of the men, and as they fell to the ground the women threw themselves over their prostrate bodies and held them down. We rode quietly by, keeping our eyes turned towards them.

We passed the night at an Indian cabin, and the next day started on our journey, each succeeding day becoming more pleasant and less fatiguing to me; thus making the trip to the residence of my wife's father, in Williamson County, near the town of Franklin, Tennessee, in about eleven days.

After remaining at the house of my father-in-law about a month, and having recovered my health entirely, I began to turn my thoughts towards some means of recuperating my attenuated purse. I had heard nothing from the company left by us at Natchez, nor had I received my private baggage left there, or heard of its being forwarded. I wrote to a Mr. Spence, who kept a warehouse at Smithland, mouth of the Cumberland River, and after a delay of two or three weeks, learned from him that trunks with my name on them, but no further directions, were in his warehouse, and had been there for some time; but he had not known where they were to be sent until

he received my letter. I got my baggage about a fortnight after.

I knew nothing of what the company were doing, nor where they were, for more than two months after my arrival in Tennessee, when I received a letter from my young friend Plummer, stating that the company had broken up, divided, and gone in different directions. He said a man of the name of Jones had been the means of dividing the company. It was not Richard Jones, the same artist who had been with us in New Orleans, but a man who bore the *sobriquet* of "West India Jones," to distinguish him from others of the name in the profession. He had purchased from Mr. J. Vaughan his interest in the wardrobe, books, music, and other property of the joint stock, and also mine and my wife's; had paid into the hands of Mr. Vaughan one-half of the money, and was to pay the remainder by sending it to such point as might be afterwards required, some time during the remaining portion of the year 1818. Suffice it say here, I never got a dollar for mine and my wife's portions. J. Vaughan, poor fellow, died a few years after, and so also did his brother Henry. From my friend Plummer I got two or three letters, but I do not know of a certainty what became of him. I heard that he had married, and settled in Mississippi, became a politician and a man of consequence,—enough so, at least, to be elected a representative to Congress from that State, about the year 1833; but I cannot vouch for the truth of this.

In the latter part of the following July I rented a small house in Nashville, and we commenced "house-keeping." In a few weeks after becoming located in Nashville, a project was started by some young gentlemen of that city to get up an amateur theatrical company, as there was no likelihood of a regular dramatic company performing there soon, and I was asked to undertake to organize and manage it. I consented so far as to say I would undertake to act as their stage-manager, on one condition: that, as it would fall to my lot to cast the pieces,—that is, to assign the characters to such individuals as I might deem the best qualified to undertake them,—there should be no objections to my decisions. I had seen enough of theatricals, and especially amateur theatricals, to know that for their successful operation, it was necessary to have an autocrat at the head of them, and one of the most inflexible nature. This was promptly agreed to, without a dissenting voice, each one pledging his word, as a gentleman, to abide by it. As soon as a selection of members had been effected, an

election for officers ensued, and resulted as follows: Gen. John H. Eaton, manager of the out-door business; Wilkins Tannehill, Esq., treasurer; N. M. Ludlow, stage-manager; Mr. — West, volunteer prompter. The first-named gentleman was afterwards secretary of war, during Gen. Jackson's first term of the presidency; Mr. W. Tannehill was cashier of the Nashville Bank; Mr. West, I think, kept a book-store. I shall not attempt to enumerate all the members of the "Dramatic Club of Nashville," but will name such as were the performers, and who in after life became distinguished for ability in the affairs of their country. The first that I shall speak of was certainly the *largest*, if not the most gifted with dramatic ability. I refer to Lieut. Samuel Houston, afterwards the renowned Gen. Sam Houston, the hero of "San Jacinto," and subsequently governor of Texas. Second, young William Fulton, then a student of law, afterwards governor of Arkansas. Third, Ephraim H. Foster, attorney-at-law, afterwards senator to Congress, in 1839, from Tennessee. Fourth, William C. Dunlap, student of law, afterwards representative to Congress, in 1833, from Tennessee. There were a number of others, the names of whom I cannot now call to mind. Then there were some honorary members, not intending to take part in the performances, such as Gen. Andrew Jackson and Judge Felix Grundy. Of ladies we had but two, Mrs. Ludlow and a young lady of the name of Macaffrey, who had a desire to become a professional actress.

The first play undertaken was the Rev. John Home's tragedy of "Douglas," which was cast as follows: *Young Norval*, Mr. William Fulton; *Lord Randolph*, Mr. W. C. Dunlap; *Glenalvon*, Mr. Samuel Houston; *Old Norval*, N. M. Ludlow (other characters, names not remembered); *Lady Randolph*, Mrs. Ludlow; *Anna*, Miss Macaffrey. Of this performance, I shall only say, it pleased *immensely*! The *Young Norval* of Mr. Fulton was quite equal in conception to the best I ever saw, and his movements on the stage, and general bearing, almost free of amateur awkwardness. Of Lieut. Houston's performance of *Glenalvon* I could not say as much. As far as appearance went, he was a noble representative of the Scots warrior; but his declamation was not equal to that of Mr. Fulton, nor was his action as graceful. Mr. Dunlap gave us a cold, but dignified representation of the Scots nobleman, and the character does not afford an actor an opportunity to do much more than that. We had no afterpiece that night; the tragedy was a long one, and I thought it best not to attempt any thing more for the first representation.

Our second performance came off about a month after the first, and consisted of a play and farce. The play was a short one, called the "Point of Honor," a translation from the French and adapted to the English stage by Mrs. Charles Kemble (mother of Mrs. Fanny Kemble), with an additional scene and different termination, written for the occasion by Gen. John H. Eaton, and which I thought a decided improvement of that drama. This play was cast as follows: *Durimel* (the young deserter), Mr. W. Fulton; *Chevalier St. Franc*, Lieut. Houston; *Valcour*, Mr. E. H. Foster; *Steinburg* (an old villain), Ludlow. This being an old man, I cast myself for it, though not in my line of business in the regular way. I did the same in the tragedy of "Douglas," and for the reason that amateurs are generally unwilling to mark their faces for wrinkles and put on gray wigs. *Bertha* was undertaken by Mrs. Ludlow, who had very little tragedy in her physical or mental composition. *Mrs Melfort* (the mother of *Bertha*) was performed by Miss Macaffrey; too great an undertaking for her, but it was "Hobson's choice," — that or nothing. Notwithstanding the insufficiency of the female representatives, the piece went off tolerably well. Mr. Fulton sustained the reputation he had acquired in his former effort; Lieut. Houston improved in his; and Mr. E. H. Foster was lively and spirited, as the part required, but lacked ease and grace. Although Lieut. Houston, in his usual manner, had a lofty, military bearing, yet I thought I had at times discovered a rich vein of comic humor in him, and I resolved, if possible, to bring it out to view; therefore, in casting the farce for the second performance, which was called "We Fly by Night," I put him into the part of a porter, who has two short scenes only, but very good ones, if well acted.

After I had cast the pieces and put them up in the "green-room" (otherwise sitting-room), Lieut. Houston walked in, and looking over the cast, where it had been placed for the notice of the members of the club, when he came to the farce, he said to me, "Ludlow, my boy, what is this you have got me up for in the afterpiece?" I replied, "Lieutenant, I am about to test the versatility of your genius; that character is a very fine bit of low comedy, — short, but 'all fat.'" He turned around, and looking me full in the face, said, "What! low comedy? Sam Houston in low comedy! Great God! my friend Ludlow, what are you thinking of? Surely you're not serious?" "I am," I said. "'By the Eternal,' sir, the people will hiss me." His admiration of Gen. Jackson was so great that he often indulged in the general's favorite oath.

I knew this character would be a "stunner" to him, for my friend Houston prized himself then not a little on his good looks, and with reason, too. I told him he need not apprehend that the people would hiss him, they were too well-bred to do that; but should any one be so rude, I would go before the audience and assume the responsibility. "Well, sir," said he, "I shall hold you to that;" adding, "I will attempt the character, because I have pledged my word not to refuse any part assigned to me." The character he had to represent was a drunken fellow, who has but two scenes in the farce.

When the night came, and the first piece was over, I took care that he should be well dressed for the character,—a check shirt, buckskin breeches, red vest, coarse stockings, heavy shoes, red cotton neckerchief tied loosely around the throat, a long-haired red wig, and a smashed hat with the crown loose and hanging on one side. As a final touch I painted his nose red, to finish the character of the drunkard. I was sitting quietly in the green-room, as the farce was about to commence, when Lieut. Houston came in, ready to go on the stage. The first thing he did was to walk up to a large looking-glass in the room, and take a view of himself; then suddenly starting back and throwing up his hands, roared out, with stentorian voice, "'By the Eternal!' can this be Sam Houston! Somebody tell me who I am!" The result was a general burst of laughter by all standing around. He paced the floor like a mad lion, and swore by all the gods he would not go on the stage. Some other person might do the part, he'd be d—d if he would! I said, "Oh, no, Lieutenant, you'll be d—d if you don't; the audience expect *you*, and will not accept of any one else." At this moment Gen. Eaton came into the green-room, and after he had talked with Houston a few minutes, the latter consented to undertake to play the part, saying to me, "Look here, Ludlow, if the people hiss me to-night, I'll shoot you to-morrow." I said, "Agreed; I accept the conditions, for I know you will perform the part well, and receive more applause than any one in the farce." As Gen. Eaton retired to go into the audience part of the house, I followed him to the door, and urged him to see that Houston was well applauded. The general fell into my views, and said he would attend to that matter. When the porter's scene came on, Houston staggered on to the stage with a trunk on his back, and crossed to the opposite side, to leave it at the house to which it was directed. As soon as he came forward and commenced speaking, the audience began to

applaud; and when he had finished the scene, and was staggering off, there was such a roar of applause as made me fear that the seats (temporarily fitted up) would give way and come down with a grand crash. Houston was raving. "D—n their souls! What do they mean by that?" he said. "Mean," said I; "why, they mean it as applause for your fine acting." "Fine damnation, sir! They mean to ridicule me, sir!" "Not at all," said I; "they mean that you have acted the scene to perfection." And so he had; it was admirable; I have never seen it performed so well by any one into whose hands it has fallen in the course of the regular profession. But no person, seemingly, could convince him that he acted that part well. The people were enthusiastic in their applause, and the newspapers spoke of his acting the part to the surprise and admiration of the audience generally.

Few persons who knew Gen. Houston, and of those few only those who were intimate with him, would be at all likely to suppose he had any comic humor in his composition; yet I never met with a man who had a keener sense of the ridiculous, or a quicker eye to discover it, nor one who could more readily assume the ludicrous or the sublime.

The second of our performances was the last one given by our amateur company: efforts were made to get up another, but in vain. Those who had been most anxious to get the amusement on foot had gratified their desire to act, and began to feel a lukewarmness towards it; others, when they were called upon, set up the excuse that business would not allow them to devote the necessary time; while a third class said they never intended to be active members, but only subscribed in order to get the scheme started; so that finally, wearied with efforts to get on with it, I resigned my office, and the affair finally died of indifference.

CHAPTER XVII.

Author becomes Manager again — Alexander Cummings and Wife — Company go to Huntsville — First Performance in Huntsville of a Regular Company — Return to Nashville — William Jones and Wife — Columbia Street Theatre, Cincinnati — Season in Nashville closes — Author attempts to become a Lawyer — An Affair of Honor — Nobody hurt — Likeness of Gen. Andrew Jackson — Author stands for the finishing of it — Jackson's Head with Ludlow's Legs.

A SHORT TIME after the subsidence of the amateur theatricals, there arrived in Nashville two persons announcing themselves as actors. These persons were Mr. Alexander Cummings and wife. Mr. Cummings was a printer by trade, and his wife one of the Miss Rickmans of the old Park Theatre, New York, whom I remembered seeing on the stage there in 1810, playing small business. I remembered the Misses Rickman because they were very pretty girls, and as I was just then verging into manhood, pretty girls always attracted my notice. This lady had grown a little more stout, but was still handsome. Mr. Cummings was a hard-featured, sandy-haired man, with grey eyes, and not much of an actor. He had married an actress, and thought of course that he must be an actor.

Mr. Cummings had heard that I was in Nashville trying to organize a company for the fall and winter ensuing, so he came to Nashville for the purpose of ascertaining what kind of an arrangement he could make with me. Finding, I presume, I had no company, and only my wife and myself to form the nucleus of one, he determined to propose a partnership, and thus to start a new company, intimating that through his wife's acquaintance in the New York theatre he could procure some performers from that city; in short, this and the advantage of having a woman of more stage experience than my own wife, induced me to go into the arrangement with him. We were to be equal partners, his wife and myself being supposed to be, in point of capacity, about of the same importance; and he and my wife of about the same value as performers. I was to attend to the stage department entirely, and he the out-door business of the theatre. So we went to work to get some additions to our company, but with very little success. Mrs. Cummings, I believe, wrote to New York to some friends there to "drum up" recruits, but none would "follow the drum."

The actors of the Eastern cities, with few exceptions, had no idea at that time what the West really was. The population of that region were supposed by many to be semi-barbarians; and to go to Kentucky or Tennessee was banishing yourself from civilization. When actors were asked to go to those new States or Territories, they would shake their heads and say, "No, I've no desire to be devoured by savages." When, then, the month of December arrived, we found that all the company we were able to muster consisted of seven males, and three females, as follows: N. M. Ludlow, Alex. Cummings, Peter Flanagan (an Irishman), George Willis, George W. Frethy, John C. Finlay, and a lad of fifteen years of age named Clark. Flanagan and Willis were cabinet-makers, and had never performed at all on the stage. Frethy was a "stage-struck" tailor, from Pittsburg, who had performed a few times in an amateur company of private theatricals. Finlay, also a tailor, had been a *sailor*, and lost one leg; and young Clark, an orphan, had neither trade nor friends to help him along in the world. Mr. Finlay was popular as a singer, was a great favorite in his sea songs, particularly one of Dibden's, entitled "Ben Block." In fact, Mr. Finlay obtained the *sobriquet* of "Ben Block," and was oftener spoken of by that name than his own real name. He would have been a very good actor but for his misfortune of losing a leg, which was done in the service of his country, Great Britain. The females were Mrs. Cummings, Mrs. Ludlow, and Miss Macaffrey. This was slim material to begin a season with, but I was not a man at that time to despair of any thing in the way of my profession. While Cummings and myself were hunting around for actors, our wives and their assistants were busy getting up a few stage-dresses, that we might be enabled to produce decently a few comedies and farces.

The new firm thought it best not to commence in Nashville, the company being too small and otherwise inefficient for a town in which there had been witnessed pieces much better performed by my company about a year previous; so concluded to go to Huntsville, Alabama, then a town of about twelve or fifteen hundred inhabitants, situated one hundred miles south of Nashville. Alabama was yet a Territory, not being admitted into the Union as a State until December, 1819.

As a preliminary measure to carrying out this plan, Mr. Cummings made a journey on horseback to Huntsville, for the purpose of ascertaining what could be done in the way of obtaining a house to perform in. In that town, at that time, it was impossible to procure any place better than a large

room which was over a confectionery store. I use the word "large" here relatively. This room was about sixty feet long by thirty feet wide, and had been used as a dancing-hall. Carpenters were set to work immediately putting up seats on the inclined plane plan, and erecting a stage at the other end of the room, from which a passage led to a wing of the building, where were two small apartments which were to be used as dressing-rooms.

Mr. Cummings had written to me to be in Huntsville by a certain date, when he thought the place we were to perform in would be ready. There were no means of conveyance to be had then in that direction, nor scarcely in any direction, except such as were procured by buying or hiring horses and wagons; there was not even a line of stages at that early day between those two important towns.

In a few days, however, I succeeded in making arrangements for the hire of horses and wagons; and taking with me six small scenes — those we had used on our way from Louisville to Nashville, in the summer of 1817 — and our recently acquired luggage, started for Huntsville. We had a pleasant, although a slow trip, being five days going the one hundred miles. Although in the month of December, the weather was delightful, just cool enough to make one active and desire to walk; this the young men did nearly all the way, keeping in company with the heavy wagon, that made from twenty to five and twenty miles per day. The three ladies I took with me in a light wagon.

Our commencement at Huntsville was with considerable misgivings of success. First, because the town was very limited in point of population; and, secondly, because there did not appear much expression of a desire to witness theatricals. Both of these apprehensions disappeared, however, as we came to understand that the wealthiest and best informed classes, those from whom we really obtained our principal support, resided not generally within the town limits, but from two to five miles around in the adjacent country, being mostly planters, and men of wealth and leisure. These would frequently come to town in their carriages and bring their families to witness our performances; and they soon began to consider theatrical amusements necessary to their pleasure. As our company was so very small, and half of it entire novices, we were much troubled to find pieces we could place before the public with any probability of affording satisfaction; but, with some skill in managing on our part, and a large share of

indulgence on the part of our auditors, we succeeded, I believe, in meeting their expectations.

The opening play was Tobin's comedy, in five acts, called the "Honeymoon," but cut down by me to three acts, and performed under the title of the "Duke's Marriage;" the first time, I imagine, it was ever played under that name. The whole piece was not badly played, except that Mr. Flanagan made the Spanish count an Irish count. Our opening farce was Sam Foote's "Liar."

We were not able to procure musicians enough to form even a quartette band, so had to rely upon one instrument, a piano, played by an Irishman named Thomas, who gave marches and waltzes during the intervals of the entertainments. The price of admission was \$1 for each person, adult or child, to which no one objected; by this rule every seat was made to "tell," and we were not much annoyed with crying children.

Now I will desire of my readers to bear in mind that this was the *first company of professional actors that ever performed in Alabama, throughout the whole Territory or State.*

We performed in Huntsville about ten weeks, giving entertainments only three nights of each week, — Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays. We could not, with our novices, get pieces ready oftener; and even then had to make many "repeats." Our season may be said to have been a success, inasmuch as we gave pretty general satisfaction; and though we made little or no money, we did not leave the town in debt, or fail to pay our company their weekly salaries. We made many pleasant acquaintances, who seemed anxious to have us return at some future day.

On a fine spring morning, early in March, 1819, we started on our road to return to Nashville, which we reached in about the same time we had taken to come from there. We found the people anxious to have us give them some amusement; they were "hungry," they said, for "theatricals." We soon arranged with the owner of the old salt-house, as they had got to calling this classic building, hallowed by the genius of Shakespeare and Sheridan; and having a pretty good stock of pieces on hand in which our novices had become, now, passable performers from practice, we opened about the 1st of April, with the same two pieces we enacted the opening night in Huntsville, viz., the "Duke's Marriage" and the farce of the "Liar," with which the audience seemed highly pleased, and of which the newspapers gave us a good notice.

A short time after we commenced our season, there suddenly and unexpectedly arrived a gentleman and lady of the profession from Cincinnati, a Mr. William Jones and wife. He had recently come to the West, and I had not heard or known any thing of him until his arrival in Nashville. Mr. Jones was a very clever actor in old men, and had for some few years prior been a member of the Park Theatre, New York city. Mrs. Jones was comparatively a novice, yet played old women respectably, her appearance not being calculated for a wide range of business; although her figure was not bad, yet she had been severely pitted with small-pox, which marred the expression of her face for any characters but old women. They engaged with us for the short season we anticipated in Nashville, on stipulated salaries and two benefits. We found them valuable additions, and Mr. Jones became a favorite with the people of Nashville. At the close of our season there Mr. Jones and wife returned to Cincinnati; and he, with Mr. Joshua Collins, as the firm of Collins & Jones, opened the new Columbia Street Theatre, in that town, about the beginning of the year 1820. This building was of brick, would seat about eight hundred persons, and was the first one erected expressly for a theatre in Cincinnati. It was built by subscriptions of the citizens.

The theatre closed early in May, with a promise of reopening the 1st of September ensuing. On the 7th of June, 1819, my wife presented me our first-born child.

Having become a *father*, I suddenly awoke to the impression of being an individual of some consequence in the world; that I had assumed additional responsibilities; that more important duties were before me, and it set me to seriously thinking what ought to be my course for the future. It had been the wish of my wife and her connections that I would abandon the stage, and try some other means of maintenance. In early life I had served a term of four years in a retail, and again in a wholesale dry goods business, with subsequently six months as out-door clerk to a shipping-house in the city of New York. The life of a dry-goods clerk was irksome to me. The sea, the navy, had always been my pet ambition, and in that capacity several of my distant kindred of the same name had distinguished themselves; but in this my youthful desires had been grievously thwarted in 1812 by a tender-hearted mother, and so, like *Rover*, in the play of "Wild Oats," as I could not become a hero in the real world, I adopted what I thought the next best, and endeavored to become a hero in the mimic world. But my own and my wife's connections

were pleased to look down upon this latter course of life with something like feelings of contempt; they seemed to think that the "blood of all the Stuarts" had been disgraced. Alas! for poor, weak, narrow, human understandings. A profession requiring the highest degree of intellectual power, the most elevated and refined taste, the combined excellencies of the poet, the painter, and the sculptor, added to those of the rhetorician! A profession, too, in which there is less deceit, less roguery, less cheating, less dishonesty, than any other of which I have any knowledge.

And now, while on this subject, I wish to record my most solemn affirmation that, take them as a class of men and women, — I mean *actors* and *actresses*, not humbugs, — I believe them to be as good, as moral, and as truly religious in thought and act as any other of the same number of beings on the face of the earth. I have lived among them and associated with them in all the relations of life for more than half a century, and I emphatically make this declaration unbiased by fear, favor, or reward. I do not wish to be understood as saying that they are free from faults, — for they are human, and subject to the frailties of human nature, — but I mean to say that they have not *more* or *greater* faults than many other classes I could mention.

Being comparatively idle during the summer of 1819, and considering that in the course of years it was reasonable to suppose I might have a family growing up around me, and revolving in my mind what friends had said, from the best of motives, against the profession of the stage, and the effect that such prejudices might have upon the prosperity of those who would, in part, be dependent on me for their positions in life, I was induced to listen to a proposal, brought about by my friends, made to me by a gentleman of good legal standing in Nashville, to become a lawyer. This gentleman, who was noted as the best land-lawyer in Tennessee, was an indifferent speaker at the bar, and, as I was told, wished to have some one associated with him who might take such labor off his hands. This proposition was thought by my friends to be a liberal one, and I was strongly urged by them to accept it. After revolving the matter in my own mind for a week, I finally, through the persuasion of my wife, closed with the gentleman's proposition conditionally, that if at any time within two months from the commencement of my study I saw fit to withdraw from the proposed agreement, I should be at liberty to do so. This was agreed to, and a volume of "Blackstone" was put into my hands, and I commenced the study with all

the ardor of a tyro. I read incessantly, morning, noon, and night, for about three weeks. This I did from a sense of duty rather than from inclination, and then, after many struggles with myself, from conflicting motives, desires, and obligations, felt the necessity of going to the gentleman, my proposed instructor, and saying to him I was satisfied I could never become an efficient lawyer. All the reading I had done in three weeks had not left the least impression on my mind of the principles laid down by the learned writer on law. After Shakespeare and Sheridan, Blackstone was to me "stale, flat, and unprofitable." I read the sentences, could comprehend their meaning, but the *ideas* wouldn't "stick;" after laying down the book, the substance would vanish entirely.

About this time I became involved in an unpleasant affair, in consequence of an attempt to pass an affront upon me by a certain Dr. H——, of Nashville, Tennessee, which made me deem it necessary to send a note to him, by a friend of mine, requiring an immediate written apology, or a meeting within twenty-four hours on grounds only that I would voluntarily consent to place myself with him, and in case of refusal saying he must expect consequences to follow that might prove very painful to both of us. My friend brought away with him an ample apology, dictated and written by himself, and signed by the aforesaid doctor, and the affair ended there. What became of him afterwards I do not know; I have never seen or heard of him since.

While I was busy with Blackstone, Mr. Cummings received a letter, as he informed me, from a manager of a theatre at either Cincinnati or Pittsburg, I forget which, offering his wife a situation as a prominent actress, and himself as prompter; but he did not exactly like the offer, and preferred to remain where he was, provided I remained on the stage, and in management. I told him I was quite unprepared to say what I should conclude on ultimately, and advised him to avail himself of the certainty then offered him rather than to depend on the uncertainty of what I should finally determine on. As the matter turned out, I advised him very much against my own interest, for his wife would have been, as an actress of great utility, invaluable to me afterwards. He took my advice, and left immediately for the purpose of joining the management referred to, and I never heard of them in any reliable way afterward.

Having determined to give up the study of law as distasteful to me, I also resolved to have as little as possible to do with it for the future, either as advocate or client, and began

to think of reorganizing a theatrical company ; but one of my principal performers, Mrs. Cummings, was gone, and I could not learn where she and her husband had located themselves. Even one of my novices, Mr. Willis, had left and gone South, where I could not exactly ascertain then, and never learned until he called to see me subsequently at New Orleans, in the spring of 1824, when he told me that after quitting Nashville he had gone South to New Orleans, thence into Texas, finally over towards the Pacific coast into Northern Mexico, where he had become a man of some considerable wealth, but by means which I could not at all approve of, — card-playing. He told me that he “went into Mexico to find gold, which he had heard could be got by digging for. Having reached some of the towns, he soon discovered he could get gold in an easier way than by digging ; that the Mexicans were greatly given to gambling, which in reality they were very indifferently skilled in, and he saw plainly he could beat them at their own games, and he did so, obtaining by that means a very important sum of money.” He made my wife a present of a nugget of gold, and he showed me a fine Spanish saddle, heavily mounted with silver, with stirrups of solid silver, that he had won at cards from a Mexican don. He said he should return to Mexico, and I presume he did ; I never heard of him again.

Perhaps my reader may be curious to know why I did not return to New Orleans in the fall of 1818, upon the invitation of Nathan Morse, Esq., and other gentlemen of influence in that city, extended to me in the spring of that year. My reasons are these : My theatrical companions having disbanded and gone in different directions, after my illness at Natchez, I found it difficult, I may say impossible, to get together a company of such talent as I wished to take with me if I returned there. Actors were afraid of the West, and still more so of the South. During the summer of 1819 I learned there were preparations being made in the city of New York by Mr. Aaron Phillips (formerly with me) to take a company to New Orleans. He being at the “headquarters” of the Drama, and somewhat acquainted with its professionals, succeeded in getting together a small company, many of them novices, and he made a venture to New Orleans late in the fall of 1819.

I will relate here a little incident that transpired, and of which I am reminded now from having recently been looking through the “Personal Recollections” of Mr. William B. Wood, for many years manager and actor of theatres in Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington City, and elsewhere, who relates in

his book a similar event. Mr. Wood, in speaking of Mr. Morton, an actor of the principal theatres of the Eastern States about the beginning of the present century, says that "Gilbert Stuart, the distinguished portrait-painter, so admired what he called Mr. Morton's 'natural grace,' that he selected that gentleman to stand as a model for the figure of Washington, which he was about to paint," and which was said afterwards to be the best likeness extant of the "Father of his Country," — the same likeness that was spread abroad in the "admirable engravings of Heath."

In the fall of 1819, or perhaps 1817, I cannot now determine which, Mr. Earl, of Nashville, having been selected to paint for the city of New Orleans a full-length likeness of Gen. Andrew Jackson, and having done only the head and neck of the general from his personal sittings, was suddenly called upon to have the picture finished and delivered in New Orleans, in complete condition to be exhibited the ensuing 8th of January. Now, it so happened that the general was absent, and to wait for his return to Nashville would not allow Mr. Earl time to comply with the earnest request of the good people of New Orleans. Being intimate with Mr. Earl, he asked me one day if I would oblige him so much as to dress and stand as the general's *representative* for a few times, that he might finish the picture for the city of New Orleans. Having strong feelings of regard for Mr. Earl as a friend, and being a great admirer of Gen. Jackson, I consented. Some persons might consider this preference a compliment (and, perhaps, would be right), to have a head of such fine military genius placed upon their shoulders; yet I assure the reader that, as far as personal appearance went, I thought the *head* under considerable obligations to the *heels*. So that in this way the city of New Orleans had a splendid picture of the head of Gen. Jackson and the *body* of N. M. Ludlow. I merely mention this fact that the city of New Orleans may be aware of the treasures they were, and perhaps are, in possession of; and that they obtained more for their money than, possibly, they have hitherto imagined.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Author visits St. Louis—First regular Dramatic Company, 1819—A Keel-boat Voyage—St. Louis in 1819—An Interview with Gen. William Clark—Unusually Cold Winter—Sam Drake, Sr., arrives with Company—Two Companies unite and perform in the Ball-room of the City Hotel—A Singular Interview with the Son of a Great Actor—Mr. John Bernard—Mrs. Whitlock, Sister of Mrs. Siddons.

IN turning my thoughts again towards theatricals, I was considerably puzzled what to do. New Orleans seemed to be out of the question then, having heard of another expedition being on foot, destined for that city, where, I felt satisfied, two companies could not make money, because of its then limited English population. The Western country was so barren of professional performers that it was next to an impossibility to procure any better than I had; and from the East, as I have before said, actors could not be induced to come. While waiting for "something to turn up," about the beginning of October, I met a gentleman in Nashville who had just come from St. Louis, a relative of my wife, who gave me such accounts of that extreme Western town as induced me to believe it was the next best point for me to attempt another pioneer expedition,—to extend the Drama westward. He gave me the address of a friend of his, a Mr. Isaac N. Henry, who was publishing a newspaper in St. Louis, with a letter of introduction to him; saying at the same time that Mr. Henry would give me a better idea of what could be done in the way of theatricals than he was able to do, and suggested that it would probably be to my interest to consult with him before proceeding thither. "Upon this hint I spake;" or, in other words, I wrote to Mr. Henry, and received in return an encouraging letter. He told me that *there had never been a theatrical company in St. Louis*; that some citizen amateurs had performed once or twice to large audiences; that the people seemed delighted with even the amateur acting; and he had no doubt I would do very well in St. Louis. The population, he said, was very limited,—between three and four thousand,—yet, from what he had witnessed of the eagerness of the people to behold the performance of the "Thespians," and the pleasure they seemed to find in such amusements, he concluded

a company of "regulars" must do well. A few days after the receipt of this letter from Mr. Henry I got one from John H. Vos, whom the reader may, perhaps, remember I spoke of in the early portions of this work as having met in Louisville. Mr. Vos having learned of Mr. Henry my inquiries relative to visiting St. Louis, wrote, urging me to come on by all means, as there was a good opening for me and my company. Mr. Vos had been located in St. Louis about a year, following his business of house and sign painting; but he had "smelt the foot-lights" of a theater, and the contagion had taken possession of him. His ambition was to *act*! He told me the temporary theatre which the "Thespians" had been occupying for one or two performances could be had on very moderate terms,—probably any sum I would offer; that he would undertake to negotiate the matter for me, and let me know the result. I authorized him to do so, and in about three weeks got an answer that all was arranged, without naming the conditions, and requesting me to come on immediately to St. Louis; adding, at the same time, that he and his wife would expect to play with us. He said the scenery and the building belonged to the same parties, and could be had for a mere nominal sum if successful, or nothing if otherwise. Looking at the condition in which I was then placed, I concluded it best to go, although I was much dissuaded from the attempt by my friends in Nashville; saying it was a long and disagreeable journey, and success very doubtful; that the town was small; that more than half the inhabitants were Canadian French, and could not appreciate the English drama; and, above all, it was too far west for the place ever to be of any size, and that it would be a half a century or more before there would be any town of consequence west of the Mississippi River. O, eventful age!

It had advanced pretty well into the fall when I made up my mind to go to St. Louis, and began to prepare myself to follow its course westward. I arranged with the young men, Finlay, Flanagan, and Frethy, also Miss Macaffrey, to accompany me and my wife. In casting around for a company, I had written to a gentleman in Cincinnati, whose acquaintance I had made during my visit there in the summer of 1817, requesting him to make engagements of some three or four persons, useful performers, if there were any such to be had, to join me at Nashville. Just as I was most perplexed about getting a sufficient company, I received a letter from him, saying he had engaged a Mr. and Mrs. Hanna, a Miss Seymour, daughter of the latter, and a Mr. Cargill; that they would

start the next day, and reach Nashville perhaps a few days later than his letter to me. This was quite a windfall, acceptable and unexpected. In a few days after they arrived. Mr. Hanna was a young man, of tolerably good appearance, and, as I found afterwards, a very useful actor. Mrs. Hanna was about ten years older than her husband, and quite stout, — a very good appearance for old women, which she played respectably. Miss Seymour was quite young, — I suppose not over fifteen years of age, — but well-grown, and rather good-looking. Mr. Cargill was a man of about forty years of age, and bore a great resemblance to Stuart's likeness of Gen. George Washington. He was a very useful man, played dignified fathers very well, and withal a very worthy, honorable man. Mr. Cargill and Mr. Hanna were both printers by trade, but had been acting for a year or two in some theatre East. About the same time a young man named Samuel Jones came from Louisville and joined me. He was also a printer, but having "smelt the foot-lights," had caught the infection, and became "stage-mad." He also had performed for a short time somewhere, previous to joining me. It is a subtle mystery in mental physiology why so many "typos" take this infection.

Depending on the company I had, and the addition of Mr. and Mrs. Vos and one or two amateurs residing in St. Louis, that I was told would be glad to act, I ventured on a voyage which every one of my friends prophesied would involve me in disaster. How far they were right this narrative hereafter will decide. The only means of conveyance to be had from Nashville to St. Louis at that time was a "keel-boat" about leaving with a load of iron-castings, which were to be taken on board at a point on the Cumberland River below Nashville.

About the 20th of November we embarked with our luggage on this keel-boat for St. Louis. We were a week in getting to the Ohio River, including the delay of taking the iron-castings on board, and nearly two days from there to the Mississippi River. All of this from Nashville, so far, was down stream; but now came the tug. The remainder of the voyage was to be performed against the current of the Mississippi, at that season of the year equal to five miles an hour. In those early days, I think there were but two or three steamboats that ran to and from St. Louis, and one of these was called the Missouri Packet, and she had passed down to New Orleans a long time before our arrival at the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. The only method of ascending this rapid river by keel-boats was "cordelling," and this

process was by putting out on shore a long, strong rope, which six or eight men would take on their shoulders, and by main strength pull the boat up against the current; opposed to this pulling, the captain of the boat would steer his craft so as to keep her from running into the river bank. It was very hard work, and very slow proceeding, seldom accomplishing more than twenty or twenty-five miles a day. We were two days getting to Cape Girardeau, Missouri, forty miles from the mouth of the Ohio. By that time my wife and I had become very tired of this slow travelling. Learning that a steamer was expected in a few days, bound for St. Louis, I concluded to go ashore with my wife and wait till the steamboat came along. The others said they would continue on the "keel." The young men were well satisfied, for it was the source of sport and pleasure to them; they had shot-guns along, and ammunition; could go ashore when the boat started, keep ahead of the "cordellers," and shoot whatever game came in their way, of which there was no lack in those days in the woods bordering on the river. The second day after going on shore, the steamer Missouri Packet arrived at Cape Girardeau, and we went on board. She was a small craft, with the passengers' cabin on the same line of deck, and aft of the furnace and boilers, after the fashion of the boats of that day; consequently we got the "benefit" of all the heat and steam directly into the cabin, but it was not extremely disagreeable except in hot weather. The name of the captain, I think, was Reid, who never ran his boat except by daylight; so that with having to put out freight at two or three points, and "wooding" four or five times through the day, — for they could not take on wood enough at night to run them through the next day, — we *were five days* getting from Cape Girardeau to St. Louis, a distance of one hundred and forty miles, arriving only about two days before the keel-boat. This seems almost incredible to those familiar with steamboating in the present day.

I confess I felt a little discouraged when I landed in St. Louis; it was not any thing like as cleanly, or as well built as any of the towns of the West or South that I had previously visited. The shore was nothing but ledges of limestone rocks, with here and there jagged projections of the same, standing like buttresses to keep off invaders; and at long intervals were to be seen a few stone warehouses, built in a very rough, though substantial manner. There was really but one street running parallel with the river that approximated to being closely built, — the present Main Street, which extended from about

Vine Street southwardly to somewhere near the termination of what is now Chouteau Avenue; with short, narrow cross-streets from the river, as Walnut, Elm, Myrtle, Almond, Poplar, etc. There were a few dwelling-houses scattered along on Second Street; the streets were unpaved, except at great intervals; sidewalks were a rarity; and at night the only lights for the streets were what the moon and stars afforded. This was St. Louis in 1819. Missouri was yet a Territory.

Just two days after our arrival, a young man of the name of King came to St. Louis from Louisville to join me, on the strength of some letters we had exchanged previous to my departure from Nashville. Mr. King was a good-looking, gentlemanly young man, with some musical ability, but not much dramatic force. However, he dressed well, and sang all the fashionable songs of the day. I found in the city a very clever painter of the name of John H. Dauberman, who had painted the scenery of the theatre for the amateurs, and he had performed some characters in their few plays. He was engaged by me to paint, and to act when I should need him; he was a man of genius, and a first-rate, good fellow. The company now consisted of ten men and five women, viz.: Ludlow, Vos, Hanna, Cargill, King, Jones, Flanagan, Finlay, Frethy, and Dauberman; Mrs. Ludlow, Mrs. Vos, Mrs. Hanna, Miss Macaffrey, and Miss Seymour.

In about a week we were ready to begin our season, which opened about the middle of December, 1819, with the comedy of "Honeymoon" (this time entire), cast as follows: *Duke*, Ludlow; *Rolando*, Vos; *Balthazar*, Cargill; *Count Montalban*, King; *Jaques* (the Mock Duke), Hanna; *Lampedo*, Frethy; *Lopez*, Dauberman; *Campillo*, Flanagan; *Juliana*, Mrs. Ludlow; *Volante*, Mrs. Vos; *Zamora*, Miss Macaffrey; *Hostess*, Mrs. Hanna. After which the farce of the "Liar." *Old Wilding*, Mr. Cargill; *Young Wilding*, Ludlow; *Sir James Elliot*, Mr. King; *Papillion*, Mr. Frethy; *Miss Grant-ham*, Mrs. Ludlow; *Miss Godfrey*, Miss Macaffrey; *Kitty*, Mrs. Vos. *This was the first dramatic performance by a professional company of comedians ever given in the city of St. Louis, Missouri.*

Prior to the opening night I waited on the principal officer of the city and Territory, Governor William Clark (of the celebrated Lewis and Clark expedition), to whom I was introduced, and whom I remembered as the finest specimen of the old Virginia gentleman. I told Gen. Clark what my object was in coming to Missouri; and as I had known of one instance

(and only one) in the West where a tax had been levied on the Drama, I wished to ascertain whether it would be required in St. Louis, and if it were, what the tax would be. He rose from his seat, and advancing to me, where I was still standing, presented his hand to me, and with that gentlemanly, bland manner peculiar to him, said: "Mr. Ludlow, we feel too much complimented by you and your company visiting us to think of committing such an uncourteous act as *taxing* you. It affords me pleasure to be able to say there is no authority for any such proceeding in Missouri," at the same time desiring me to be seated. He took a chair beside me, and entered into conversation with my friend and myself on the advantages he conceived there were to be derived in any community from well-regulated dramatic performances. After an hour pleasantly passed we took our leave, and when the season commenced I waited on the governor and presented him with a *carte blanche* ticket for our theatre.

The building occupied by us had been erected by means of subscriptions, expressly for a theatre; it was started by and intended for the use of an amateur society of young men of the town. It stood on what is now known as city block thirty (30), bounded by Olive, Locust, Main, and an alley. It fronted east, and stood about forty feet back from the west side of Main Street, extending to the middle of the block, being about sixty feet wide by one hundred and twenty long. It had a stage about thirty feet in depth; one tier of boxes, and a large pit that ran under the boxes, seating in all about six hundred persons. The scenery, although limited in variety, was well painted by Mr. John H. Dauberman, all done in water-colors, and without any gilding; still, though plain, it was very neat and tasteful.

We were enabled to get together only four or five musicians one of whom is still (1880) living in St. Louis. Our performances were three times per week — Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, — and appeared to give general satisfaction.

I have previously said that this opening of the theatre was the first dramatic performance by a *regular* company in St. Louis. It may be well enough to add something to this statement. Mention has been made in public print — once, at least, within my knowledge, perhaps oftener — of a company visiting St. Louis *prior* to 1819. The writer of the paragraph referred to, probably was misled by the representations of some person who had confounded circumstances and dates. The reader of this book may, perhaps, remember that I mentioned visiting Cincinnati in the summer of 1817, and of my

engaging a portion of the company of Mr. William Turner, then closing an unprofitable season there, and of his assuring me that he intended to abandon theatricals and return to the East. This latter course, it seems, he did not pursue; but abandoning management, took his wife and family to St. Louis, with the view, as I was told, of ascertaining whether it might not be a desirable point at which to establish himself in his original business, which was, I think, book-binding or printing. Shortly after arriving in St. Louis, Mr. John H. Vos came there from Louisville; they became acquainted, and neither being overstocked with cash, concluded to get up, jointly, the best kind of public entertainment in a theatrical way that was possible, with their very limited numbers. Their effective force consisted of Mrs. Turner, a clever actress; Mrs. Vos, an almost entire novice; Mr. Vos, not much practiced, but possessing a good share of natural talent; and Miss Emma Turner, a promising girl of about twelve years of age. Mr. Turner, I believe, sometimes went on the stage, but was no actor. They procured an old building that stood on the square bounded by Third and Fourth, Spruce and Almond Streets, the same block on which the hospital of the Sisters of Charity once stood. Into this building they put seats. Mr. Vos painted a few scenes for it, and they performed, with the aid of two amateurs found in the city, ten or twelve nights, finally giving it up, the support not being sufficient. Now this certainly could not properly be called a *regular* dramatic company. The above information I received from Mr. Vos, some time after my opening in St. Louis in 1819, and the same has been recently confirmed by a gentleman who is now and has been living in St. Louis since 1810.

Our performances were very well attended for the first three weeks, and until the weather became so cold that the ladies were unwilling to venture out; and men stayed away from the theatre because there were but few ladies attending the performances. We did our best to warm the building, but the only means attainable were some old-fashioned stoves, and those of not much capacity; and although kept red-hot nearly all the time, had but little effect on distant parts of the building.

About this time Mr. Samuel Drake, Sr., my former old manager, arrived in St. Louis with his company from Louisville, without knowing, as he said, that there was any theatrical company in the town. This meeting was unfortunate for both of us, for the place could not afford support for two companies; one, therefore, must be crowded to the wall, and it

did not take long to determine which it should be. We had the theatre, and it was thought there was not a room large enough to be had for theatrical purposes in the town. However, Mr. Drake, who with his company had stopped at the only hotel of any consequence in the place at that day, made arrangements with the landlord, a Mr. Bennet, to use the ball-room, the size of which was about thirty by sixty feet. In this room Mr. Drake had some seats erected on the inclined plane plan, with a small stage on the same floor, divided from the audience only by the scenery. This house, known then as the "City Hotel," stood at the north-east corner of Third and Vine Streets, then the extreme north-west quarter of the town; indeed, I may say it was hardly in town at all.

Mr. Drake had the advantage of us in two ways: his room could be made comfortable during the cold weather, and his company was better than ours; he had performers of more experience in the profession. He performed three nights per week, or those nights that we did not; in this way the small town of St. Louis, with scarcely four thousand inhabitants, had a draft upon it in the way of amusements for six nights of each week. It required no prophet to see that this would end shortly. To add to my mishaps, on one of the extreme cold nights we performed M. G. Lewis's play of the "Castle Spectre," in which my wife had to sustain the tragic part of *Angela*. She had undertaken it very reluctantly, feeling it was beyond her powers, and this feeling had depressed her all the time she was performing the character; in fact, she had been miserable in regard to it for three days, so much so that she could not sleep.

She succeeded in the performance very well until the "ghost scene," where the ghost of *Evelina*, her mother, appears to her, to whom she kneels, and is enveloped in that position by the white drapery flowing from the head of the spectre, and as the latter was retreating from her she *fainted* and fell upon her face. It had a fine and thrilling effect upon the audience; but when the curtain descended that shut out the audience, and I ran to raise her up, I found she had fainted *in reality*. We made use of the proper means to bring about consciousness, but I found her so unnerved and prostrated that she could not finish the part, and I was compelled to go before the audience and state our dilemma. They received the announcement with great kindness, and a friend of mine rose from his seat in the pit, and asked that Mrs. Ludlow be permitted to retire to her own residence for the night, and that it should be only required of us to perform the farce, in

which she had nothing to do. This movement was seconded by loud applause. I then withdrew, ordered a carriage, and Mrs. Ludlow with Miss Macaffrey went home. The cause of this fainting, I became satisfied, was the result of her over-anxiety, superinducing a weakness, disturbing the nerves, and extending its influence to the brain; this and the extreme cold, together with feelings induced by the scene she had been enacting, altogether brought on this condition of syncope. Mrs. Ludlow was attacked that night with a fever, and did not recover her usual health for more than a week. We performed only two additional nights, when we concluded to shut the house until the weather became milder. After this Mr. Drake had the field all to himself, but the "harvest-home" was any thing but satisfactory to him, and decidedly unfortunate for me.

Prior to closing the theatre, I had an interview with Mr. Drake, in order to ascertain what sort of an arrangement could be effected with him for our company and ourselves, provided we should shut our house. He offered to engage and pay salaries to myself and wife, Mr. Vos, Mr. Cargill, Mr. Hanna and wife, and Miss Seymour. He said he could not afford to engage any more, for he feared the town would not support a very large company. Mr. Drake's company, as it stood then, was not, in point numbers, equal to mine, he having only eight male performers, including himself, viz., S. Drake, Sr., S. Drake, Jr., Alex. Drake, Palmer Fisher, Henry Lewis, James O. Lewis, James Douglas, and I believe, one young man who delivered messages and attended to business behind the scenes, technically called a "property-man;" Miss Denny, Miss Julia Drake, Mrs. Fisher, Mrs. Lewis, and Mrs. Mongin, five female performers. Mr. Vos declined the conditions offered him; he would not accept the terms unless his wife was also engaged, Mr. Drake objecting to engage her. I told Mr. Vos I should avail myself of the clause in our agreement, to "withdraw when I was satisfied the scheme would not pay." He made no objections, and we parted good friends.

Before entering into Mr. Drake's company again, I wish to say something in regard to new members, or those added since I left him at Louisville. Of the men, Mr. Palmer Fisher may be mentioned first, as he was Mr. Drake's principal tragedian and leading man. He was an Englishman, born I may say, in a theatre, or at all events raised from infancy in theatres. He was the brother of the deceased Mrs. Drake, Sr., and had performed in many of the most important provincial theatres of England. I was told that in former years

he had been called in England a very clever actor in tragedy ; it is possible he may have been, but in my mind not very probable, for he had a heavy, dull face, perfectly void of any expression. His wife was the very opposite of him, being then young, handsome, lively, and with more real talent, but with less experience in the profession than her husband. It was always a wonder to me what induced her to marry him ; but "nature delights in opposites," says the "Hunchback." The same lady some years after lost her husband by death, and she subsequently became Mrs. Thayer, under which name she has been favorably known and highly respected for several years in Eastern cities, especially in Philadelphia, where, on the 1st of June, 1872, she took leave of the stage to enjoy the comforts of private life.

Mr. Henry Lewis was born in England, and lived there nearly all his life. He was a son of William T. Lewis, of the London stage, said to be the finest genteel-comedy actor performing in the theatres of Great Britain at the close of the last century. Mr. William T. Lewis was the first who obtained the antecedent to his name of "gentleman." He was called "Gentleman Lewis," some say, in reference to the line of characters he generally performed ; others, that it was to distinguish him from a Mr. Lewis, also an actor of some note, in England. The day after my enrolment in Drake's company, it was proposed I should be introduced to Harry Lewis, son of the "great Lewis." As a young *Western* actor, I felt some diffidence in approaching an actor from *London*, and a son of the "great Lewis." However, as the father had always been my *beau ideal* of a fine gentleman, and as I was striving for a reputation as an actor in the same line of business, and as I had heard from the elder Drake and Mr. Fisher that Harry Lewis was a living embodiment of all his father's qualities, I determined to cast aside my apprehensions and be introduced to him at once. So, when S. Drake, Jr., said to me one day, "Come with me, and I will introduce you to Harry Lewis," away I posted with him. He was not in his room. "We will find him in the theatre" (ball-room), said Drake ; thither I went with him. On entering, I paused to look around for the great man ; I discovered him at the farther end of the room, seated near a fire, with one leg over the other, in a dirty dressing-gown and dilapidated slippers, smoking a "corn-cob" pipe, such as the negroes of the country usually smoked. I beheld a man of about five feet ten inches in height, lank, lugubrious, and with a shock of red hair that looked as though it had not been disturbed for a month.

When my name was mentioned I bowed, and he "grunted" something that sounded like "umph;" and, without rising, continued smoking his cob pipe. I ventured a remark or two, such as, "had heard of the greatness of his father's peculiar talent; was happy in making acquaintance with the son of a man whose reputation had always commanded my highest esteem for him," and the like; but could obtain nothing more from him than a "grunt" and a puff of smoke from his corn-cob. Finding he was not disposed to be civil then, if he ever was, I rose soon from my seat and bade him good-day. Shortly after this interview, the comedy of the "Jealous Wife" was played, in which Mr. Harry Lewis assumed the character *Lord Trinket*. When the play began, I expected, in the course of it, to get a glimpse, through the son, of what the father had been; but here, again, I was sadly disappointed,—the character was neither dressed nor acted well.

I had, at that day, fresh in my memory what I had seen Mr. John Bernard make of the character of *Lord Trinket*, at Albany, New York, during the season of 1813-14. Mr. Bernard had performed in England during the best days of "Gentleman Lewis," and probably gave me a better copy of that splendid comedian than the one more recently placed before my eyes. Mr. Bernard was in his seventieth year when I saw him play *Lord Trinket*, and he was more active and more elegant in his bearing than Mr. Harry Lewis, who, I should suppose, could not have been over thirty or thirty-five in 1820. At the time I saw Mr. Bernard perform *Lord Trinket*, the *Mrs. Oakly* of the night was Mrs. Whitlock (a sister of the great Siddons), who was then, I suppose, about forty-five years of age; yet I have not seen either of the characters performed as well since. There were three Lewises in Mr. Drake's company, but in no way related to each other. Mrs. Lewis was the same lady spoken of in the early chapters of this book as lost and found in the Western wilderness. She was excellent in the line of old women. James O. Lewis was a wild, rackety young man, who played what is technically called "walking gentleman," for which he was well adapted, being good-looking and spirited. Miss Julia Drake had become a very clever actress, and very beautiful. The rest of Mr. Drake's company I have spoken of before.

CHAPTER XIX.

Author engages with Mr. Drake—Mr. Drake and Company depart for Louisville—Mr. Ludlow returns to St. Louis—Attempts a New Business—Chester Harding, the Artist—Likeness of Dan. Boone—Ludlow and King on a Tour—Visit St. Charles—Comic Adventures—They go to Edwardsville—Land at Gibraltar—Gov. Ninian Edwards—The Party return to St. Louis—James O. Lewis—Author thinks of going to Pensacola.

THAT portion of my company that were not engaged by Mr. Drake were content to remain in St. Louis; and as all of them had trades that were ever in demand, they found no difficulty in procuring employment that paid them better than their inefficient theatrical acquirements could have done.

I think it was about the 1st of February, 1820, that I reappeared in Mr. Drake's company, opening in the character of *Young Marlow*, in Goldsmith's comedy of "She Stoops to Conquer," which was cast as follows: *Sir Charles Marlow*, Mr. Cargill; *Young Marlow*, Ludlow; *Old Hardcastle*, S. Drake, Sr.; *Hastings*, J. O. Lewis; *Tony Lumpkin*, Aleck Drake; *Miss Hardcastle*, Miss Denny; *Mrs. Hardcastle*, Mrs. Lewis; *Miss Neville*, Mrs. Mongin; concluding the evening with the farce of "A Day After the Wedding;" *Colonel Freeloze*, Mr. Ludlow; *Lady Elizabeth*, Miss Julia Drake; other characters not remembered. The second night was played Sheridan's comedy of the "Rivals." The pieces were well played, and gave general satisfaction. It seldom happened that Mr. Henry Lewis and myself performed in the same play; our lines of business being similar, when one played, the other was generally out of the piece. I soon found that Mr. Drake's most especial object in engaging me was to supply the place of Mr. Henry Lewis, who was to leave in the spring for England, in order to take charge of some property devolving on him by the recent death of an elder brother.

My wife's engagement did not commence at the same time that mine did, and she did not appear till about the middle of February. We got along with the Drake company very smoothly for two or three weeks, when the manager put my wife in for an insignificant character, that was not consonant with the nature of her engagement; the result was she refused to go on for the part, was forfeited a week's salary, and I with-

drew her and myself from the company. It may have been a stroke of policy in Mr. Drake, after having stopped our proceedings as a company; he may have taken this method, anticipating the result, to reduce his expenses. Be that as it may, he did himself no service by it; for his business soon began to fall off from some cause, and not long after his company left for Louisville, *via* Vincennes, Indiana, a small town about one hundred and twenty miles from Louisville, containing then a population of about fifteen hundred people. Here a portion of the company remained and performed for a few weeks, and here Mr. James Douglas was drowned, while bathing in the Wabash River. Of this I have made mention in a former chapter.

About this time I found myself in a very unpleasant situation; a wife and child to care for, a small amount of money in my pockets, and a very blue prospect before me. The people of the town appeared to have *quantum suf* of theatricals, judging from the diminutive receipts of the closing weeks of the Drake season; nevertheless, Mr. Vos, having done nothing himself, was anxious we should try it once more together. The young men lately with us were still in the town, and ready to try their fortunes again on the public stage. We had now, in addition, Mr. James O. Lewis, who, like myself, had some difficulty with Mr. Drake, and withdrew from his company at the close of the season. After turning the matter over in my mind, I concluded to try a few nights, in which we were to put up some names for benefits. Our organization for this temporary season was a sharing scheme, based on nominal salaries, and paid *pro rata*, after deducting all expenses of the theatre. As regarded the benefits, it was agreed that a fixed sum should be set down as the charges for the night, to be paid if that amount came into the theatre, the beneficiary to have all over that sum, and not to be held responsible for any deficiency; should the receipts fall short of the charges, the night in such case becoming a stock night. It was agreed that I should put my name up first, then Mr. Vos, then Mrs. Ludlow, then Mr. Lewis, then Mr. Dauberman, who had many acquaintances and friends in the town. By my benefit I cleared about \$100; Mr. Vos, about \$70; Mrs. Ludlow, about \$80; Mr. Lewis, \$50; but Mr. Dauberman about \$150. Mr. Dauberman made great exertions among his friends, and went to some additional expense in new scenery. The other members declined putting their names up. We tried the town two or three nights with a "blood and thunder" play, called "Abëllino, or the Great

Bandit," in which I had to enact the blood-thirsty robber and the elegant courtier; but after murdering every body in the play, and the part too, for three nights, gave up the fruitless attempt and the hopeless season, and told the young men they had better depend upon their "shop-boards" rather than the boards of the theatre for a living.

I am of the opinion that a more unfavorable time than the year 1819-20 for the commencement of any new business venture in St. Louis has not occurred from the day of its first foundation by Pierre Laclède Liguist, in 1764, up to the present time. St. Louis had in 1819, I believe, two banks, which had been in operation about two years. The object of these banks had been to loan money; and as every body was solvent when they *commenced* business, every body could borrow money of them, whether they were actually in need of it or not. The result was that in a couple of years, when payment had been required of what had been borrowed, there was a "tightness in the money market." During the "flush" times of 1817-18, there was a spirit among the people for building finer private dwellings, and larger public buildings. Among other projects was one for a theatre, to be built on a liberal scale, the money to be raised by subscriptions. A number of supposed responsible names were obtained, a first instalment paid in, and a foundation for the theatre laid on Chestnut Street, south side, midway between Second and Third Streets. When finished, it was to be rented to the first responsible and enterprising manager who should apply for it. But only a few feet in height of the foundation had been laid when the money gave out, and as no one appeared willing to pay more, the erection of the building stopped and was never resumed. Some time afterwards a livery-stable was erected on the walls, and subsequently the principal police station had the honor of occupying the ground.

For about three months I was idle in St. Louis, my purse all the time getting "small by degrees, and beautifully less," causing me much uneasiness. I could not think of running in debt, for I saw no prospect of being able to pay at any specified future time. My apprehensions lest my wife and child should lack the necessaries of life made me miserable. This state of mind was noticed by my friend James O. Lewis, who was a jolly, "devil-may-care," but good-hearted fellow, always willing to serve a friend as far as he was able. I stated to him what my apprehensions were, when he opened to me a project he had in view, which was this: He had made the acquaintance of a very clever artist in the town, of the

name of Chester Harding, a Massachusetts man, who had painted a likeness of old Daniel Boone; and that he, Lewis, intended to engrave from the likeness (engraving had been his former occupation) a picture about eight by ten inches square; and he thought they would be eagerly bought, especially if they could be got up so that the picture, frame, and glass could be sold for one dollar. "Now," said he, "could not you do the gilding of the frames? If you are successful I will divide the proceeds with you, — I furnishing the pictures, you the framing."

Here was a new idea, but it did not take a long time for me to determine on my course. I procured an encyclopædia of the arts, studied over the particular branch I wished to obtain some insight of, and went to work. I failed at first to accomplish what I wished to do, tried again, and continued trying, until I finally succeeded so far as to produce a tolerably fair piece of work. In the process of these experiments I was much aided by the suggestions of Mr. Harding, with whom I had become acquainted, and whom I found a very pleasant and kind-hearted man. My friend Lewis and I ascertained that after paying a carpenter for making the frames, and purchasing the glass and rings necessary, we could sell the pictures for one dollar each and leave ourselves a fair profit. So we prepared to go to work, Lewis on the engraving and I on the gilding.

The portrait of Daniel Boone by Harding was pronounced an admirable likeness by all who knew the brave old pioneer. Whoever has that likeness, or a copy of it, by Harding himself, has probably the truest likeness of Daniel Boone, the pioneer of the West, that can be found. The State of Missouri, if it has not already secured the original picture, should do so now, and have it hung in the Senate Chamber of the State, that the officers of the State may be reminded of the self-reliant, honest, great man who once lived within its borders. Shortly after the likeness was finished by Harding, Col. Daniel Boone died, aged about ninety years, on the 26th or 28th of December, 1820.

I have recently seen a statement in print that the old hunter died, as he had lived, with his rifle in his hands; that, old and feeble as he was in 1820, he would still take his rifle and go into the woods to hunt for game; that on one of such occasions, being absent longer than expected, his grandson went in search of him, and found him on his knees behind an old stump of a tree, with his rifle across the stump, and his head inclined forward on it. He was dead! The statement

went on to say it was supposed that, having discovered a deer or some other wild animal, he had kneeled to steady his aim by resting his rifle on the stump, and that in this situation the excitement incidental to the moment, together with his extreme old age, had produced congestion of the brain and caused instant death. This tale is quite romantic and interesting, lacking only one essential historical quality, — *truth!* Daniel Boone died on a bed in his son's house, in the interior of Missouri, of some fever from which he could not rally; so went peacefully and tranquilly to rest with his forefathers.

About two months from the time of beginning, we had finished some of the pictures for delivery. The engraving was on copper-plate, and a tolerably good copy of the painted likeness. We started a person out with a sample picture to obtain subscribers, and he soon got upwards of two hundred names. We then commenced to deliver such as were ready, framed and glazed. There was some disappointment and delay in the wood-work, and at times the demand for the pictures was greater than the supply; but we soon found a remedy for this.

While Mr. Lewis was at work on the engraving, Mr. King, the singing young man who had been performing in our theatre, proposed to go to two or three of the neighboring small towns and give a night or two of entertainment in each, of "songs and recitations;" and he was desirous to have me join with him in the adventure. I consented to try it, although I had not much liking for such projects; so in a few days we had arranged our programme, consisting of "Songs by Mr. King, Recitations by Mr. Ludlow, and Duets by King and Ludlow." Such kind of entertainment was not only a novelty to the people in those days in the West, but a novelty to me; however, I put a bold face on the matter, and went to work with as much impudence as many other men who undertake a business of which they know nothing. Our first town was St. Charles, eighteen miles north-west from St. Louis, a town containing, in 1820, from twelve to fifteen hundred inhabitants. How we got there I do not now recollect, but I think there was some kind of a stage running between the two towns. We stopped at the only public-house there, and got the use of its so-called ball-room, of about thirty by fifty feet area; six feet of the length of which, at one end, we appropriated for the "stage," occupying the remaining space with chairs set on the level floor. We filled the blank places of our bills, or programmes with the date and place of performance, and price of admission, — fifty cents. When the night came

we had nineteen persons present, four of those being the landlord and some of his family, — “dead-heads;” cash receipts being \$7.50. We were a little surprised at this, our first night in a town where Mr. King had been told they were “thirsting for amusement.” I told King that I thought their “thirst” had dried them up, and I was for starting the next morning to return to St. Louis; but the landlord came to the rescue of King, and said the people were highly pleased, but thought the price of admission too high. He said there had been a menagerie there not long before, that charged only twenty-five cents admission, and “they had a monkey that was a wonder on the tight-rope;” and he assured us that if we would give another night, and charge only a quarter for admission, we would “have the room full, especially if one of us would dance a hornpipe.” I told the landlord I was quite out of practice in the dancing of hornpipes; but that my friend Mr. King, I thought, was very great in that way, and perhaps he would oblige them if called upon. Now King had as great a dislike to dancing as I had, and would much prefer to see a monkey dance than fully grown men and women. Through the landlord’s persuasion and King’s urging, I agreed to make another attempt to draw the people in (but without the dancing), and put out our second night’s entertainment, and we had *thirty* persons who paid, making the cash receipts precisely the same as the first night. But this was not the worst of it; when we had gone through the programme, having sung the last duet, there was a little bustling as though the people were getting up to leave the room; then suddenly they returned to their seats. King had observed this movement, and came to an adjoining room where I was, and said: “The people are not going out; what does it mean?” I said: “Do you go out and tell them it is all over.” “No,” said he, “I am not used to making speeches to an audience. I wish *you* would go.” I suspected what was the matter; so I went out and told them that although the receipts of the two nights were far from meeting our expenses, still we were obliged to those ladies and gentlemen who had favored us with their presence, then bade them farewell. As I was about to retire I heard my name called from among the auditors, so turned to learn what was wanted. The voice was that of our landlord, who said: “Mr. Ludlow, the audience would like to have a hornpipe from Mr. King.” I paused a moment, then said: “If such is the pleasure of the audience, I will ask Mr. King to oblige them, and if possible for him to do so, I’m sure he will undertake it.” I then retired, and found King striding up and down the floor and tearing his hair, as

though he would pull it all out by the roots. The first thing he said was: "Oh, my God! Mr. Ludlow, how could you get me into this scrape? This is all a consequence of what you said to the landlord about my being a *dancer!*" Mr. King, although a "play-actor," was, strange as it may appear, a modest young man, and could not be prevailed upon to *dance*. At length I said: "I'll settle this matter, and send them away quietly. So I went before the people and said: "Ladies and gentlemen, it is a very unpleasant duty which I have to perform, in being compelled to say to you that it is impossible for Mr. King to oblige you to-night with a "hornpipe," for two or three reasons: first, he has not his dancing-shoes along with him; secondly, he has corns on his toes, and his boots pinch him; and, third, there is no music present to dance to. Therefore he begs you will excuse him." I had bowed and was retiring, when the same voice called out again: "Mr. Ludlow," — I turned back — "we have a fiddler here in the house, and the ladies wish to know if *you* couldn't oblige them with a dance?" This took me quite "aback," as the sailors say. 'Twas rather more than I calculated upon. However, I soon rallied, and said I was always ready to do any thing for the ladies that 'twas possible for me to accomplish, but in this case I trusted they would excuse me, when they learned that I had been raised a Quaker, and to dance was contrary to my *religion*. Here some half dozen rogues laughed out loud, and I took advantage of it and bowed myself off; the *elite* of St. Charles retired, and I have never had the pleasure of visiting that pleasant little town since that day.

Mr. King was not discouraged by this failure in our expectations, but was for prosecuting the trip further. Our next town, according to the original plan, was Edwardsville, Illinois. To reach this place, our most direct route, we were told at St. Charles, would be down the Missouri to the Mississippi River, land at a small town on the Illinois shore, called, if I remember correctly, Gibraltar. We purchased a canoe and started down the Missouri River; reached the Mississippi in about four or five hours (twenty-two miles); crossed to the Illinois side by the force of the current out of the Missouri River, which, being much swifter than the Mississippi, forces its way across, almost to the opposite shore, as it escapes from its mouth, and then gradually recoils towards the Missouri side; the line dividing the two rivers being distinctly seen and easily determined by the difference in the appearance of the two streams, — the former being clear water, the latter muddy. We hauled our canoe to the land and hid it among

the bushes, then started to find the *town* of Gibraltar. After wandering amidst bushes and briars for some time, we at last discovered a two-story building, unfinished, and apparently abandoned, if it had ever been inhabited. We then found a tolerable sized log-cabin, then two or three more untenanted ones; and this was all of Gibraltar. I think the town has since disappeared entirely. There was no conveyance of any kind to be had, and we were compelled to walk all the way to Edwardsville, getting there about sundown. Edwardsville was and is a very pretty village, and at that time the residence of Gov. Ninian Edwards, who was at one time a United States senator from Illinois, and in 1824 envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to Mexico. I had a letter of introduction to Gov. Edwards, but he was gone from home. Some portion of his family, I believe, attended the one night's performance we gave in Edwardsville, and *but* one; for the place was too small and many of the people too *religious* to give support to such horrible creatures as "play-actors." And so we returned to Gibraltar, and without encountering any difficulties from its impregnable surroundings save with being scratched by the briars. We again betook ourselves to our canoe and returned at once to St. Louis, somewhat wiser in regard to the country around us, and considerably poorer than when we went away. Mr. King, not long after, left St. Louis and went East. I never met him again.

On my return I found about one hundred and fifty of the frames ready for the gilding process. I set to work upon them, and after some failures, succeeded in getting them into a salable condition, and improved on them as I proceeded. They were ready sales, as I have said, at first; but after awhile the sale began to drag,—the market was supplied, except now and then a demand for a single one. When the picture business was declining, Lewis began to think of taking his departure from St. Louis, and shortly after left me, to return to New York, *via* the great north-western lakes. I did not see or hear of him again until the summer of 1828, when, being on my way to New York, and passing through Detroit, Michigan, I met Mr. Lewis in the streets of that town, neither knowing previously what had become of the other. He seemed very glad to meet me; told me he was employed by Gen. Lewis Cass, governor of Michigan Territory, to paint likenesses of celebrated Indian chiefs and warriors, of which the governor was making a collection for his own private picture-gallery. He then took me with him to the museum of Indian pictures and curiosities, to show me some of the portraits he had painted, and

which appeared to me cleverly done. Lewis was somewhat a universal genius, and although not great at any thing, was passably good in all things he would undertake. This work of Mr. Lewis's was the beginning of what was more extensively carried out in after years by that well-known and ingenious artist, Mr. George Catlin, whose Indian portraits are celebrated in Europe as well as in America, and who, I believe, is now dead. In making a settlement with Mr. Lewis, prior to his quitting St. Louis, a few of the likenesses of Boone fell to my lot; these, at intervals, were called for, till even the last one was surrendered, which was done during my absence, or I would probably have one now. This loss has always been a matter of sincere regret to me.

Notwithstanding my first unsuccessful efforts to plant the Drama in St. Louis, still I had an abiding confidence in the future greatness of the place; then, the kindness and friendship I had met with caused me to become warmly attached to its inhabitants, and I determined that at some future day I would return and settle among them.

I remember walking, on a beautiful spring day of 1820, in what was then called "Lucas Grove," a portion of the suburbs (now the centre of the city), and saying to my wife that "one day this spot would be a part of the greatest inland city on the northern portion of the continent of America." She laughed incredulously, and asked me why I thought so. I told her to turn over in her mind what she could remember of her geography, and reflect upon the two great rivers, Mississippi and Missouri, and their numerous tributaries; the vast regions of country and the variety of climate that they traversed; the thousands of industrious hands that would be employed in building up homes near those rivers; the countless millions of wealth that *must* find its way to the junction of those two grand rivers, and then you will understand why I think so. She replied: "If such are your ideas of St. Louis, why do you ever talk of leaving it?" I answered: "Because I imagine I see better prospects for me, at the *present* day, at another point; but I feel at the same time assured that point can never become a place of the importance that St. Louis will be. My profession of the 'stage' will not yield me a living in St. Louis; I have no money with which I could commence another business here; by going South I may get employment in my profession, probably at New Orleans, where I am known, and where a theatre is better supported than in any other portion of this new country." I continued: "You have heard me speak of Pensacola as an object, in a *business*

point of view. My attention at present is directed to that place by the events of the day, and to that town I shall go this coming fall. Should I find no inducements to remain there, I shall return to New Orleans and pursue my profession." These reasons seemed to satisfy my wife for the time. Lest it should be supposed that the idea of "going to Pensacola," was an indication of insanity in me, I crave permission to assure my reader that Pensacola, in 1821, was supposed to be the El Dorado of the United States, a point at which fortunes could be picked up in two or three years.

As soon as the purchase of East and West Florida was concluded, by the king of Spain signing the articles of transfer, in October, 1820, the whole country was preparing to rush into Pensacola. The description that was sent abroad of its grand bay, its unrivalled harbor, and its beautiful site for a city, was imbuing people with the most extravagant notions of its sudden importance; and I, among others, became a subject of the popular mania.

Finding myself with only the fragments of a company in St. Louis,—a town that, as far as my experience had gone then, was not sufficient to sustain a dramatic company for any length of time,—I came to the conclusion of abandoning management for awhile, and to try what I could do in some other way. I thought of what I had heard of Pensacola; of the great advantages it offered to enterprising young men; reflected on the prospects of an increasing family, and finally made up my mind I would go there, and see what the prospects might be of realizing a better condition for myself.

CHAPTER XX.

Collins & Jones — Managers of New Theatre in Nashville in 1820 — Author starts on his first Starring Tour — Arrives at Nashville — Meets Col. Sam Houston — Plays Six Nights — Jones and Company return with Author to St. Louis — A Fearful Night in a Forest — Unexpected Hospitality.

ABOUT this time I learned that Messrs. Collins & Jones were making a season of theatricals in Nashville, occupying the New Theatre, that had been recently finished, and which they were the *first* to perform in, commencing during the summer of 1820. I thought there might be an opportunity for me to act with them for a short time; besides, I had a desire to see my father-in-law's family again before leaving for the South. Therefore, about the last week of September I crossed the Mississippi, near sundown, to the Illinois side, leaving my wife and child under the charge of my friends, Mr. and Mrs. Henry; rode two or three miles, and stopped at a house, where I put up for the night, with the intention of making a very early start the next morning, as it was requisite for me to do in order to reach a certain house, where I might expect good entertainment for the night. As soon as the morning came, and it was light enough for me to see my way on the road, I started; rode all day, and until between nine and ten at night, stopping but twice during a ride of about seventeen hours, and then no longer than an hour and a half, in which time I fed my horse and ate something myself. Thus I accomplished in the first day's ride seventy-two miles of the long road before me.

I crossed the Ohio River at a small town called Golconda, about fifteen miles above the mouth of the Cumberland River. After reaching Kentucky, I could not make as many miles in a day I had done over the level prairies of Illinois, for the remaining part of my road was rough and hilly; so I was nearly a week in performing my journey to Nashville.

On reaching that town, as I alighted from my horse at the door of the "Nashville Inn," I encountered my friend Houston, then known as "Colonel" Sam Houston. He appeared pleased to see me, and inquired whether I had come to Nashville to perform. I told him I would do so if I could find an

opening with the managers. He replied: "They *must* find an opening for you; the people wish to see you, and they will not be satisfied unless you perform here, now you are among them." I said it would afford me great pleasure to appear on the stage before my old friends again, but I did not know whether the arrangements of Messrs. Collins & Jones would permit of their offering me a short engagement; at all events I wished first to visit my wife's family in the adjoining county. He said: "Very well; only, my friend Ludlow, remember you are to return here and give us a taste of our favorite beverage, *comedy*. I will talk with Collins & Jones, and have the matter arranged for your appearance by the time of your return." The next morning early I was on my way to Franklin, Williamson County, and reached my father-in-law's house in time for a late breakfast.

On my return to Nashville I found that Col. Houston had seen Mr. Jones (Mr. Collins was absent), and had arranged that I was to play on my return. With Mr. William Jones I was acquainted, he and his wife having performed in my company during the spring of 1819, and it appeared to afford him a pleasure to bring me before my old friends again. It was settled that I was to perform six nights, five of those nights to share with the management in the receipts, after a deduction of \$150 per night; on the sixth, my "benefit" night, I was to have half of the gross receipts. The nights of performance were four in each week, and I opened with the comedy of the "Honeymoon" and farce of "Three Weeks After Marriage." In the former I enacted the *Duke Aranza*, in the latter *Sir Charles Racket*; the leading lady of the company, Mrs. Groshon, performing the *Duchess* and *Lady Racket*. The second night, the comedy of "The Jealous Wife;" *Lord Trinket*, Ludlow; *Mrs. Oakly*, Mrs. Groshon; the farce, "The Hunter of the Alps;" *Felix*, Ludlow. Third night, the comedy of "A Cure for the Heartache;" *Young Rapid*, Ludlow; and the farce of "A Day After the Wedding;" *Colonel Freeloze*, Ludlow; *Lady Elizabeth Freeloze*, Mrs. Groshon. Fourth night, the comedy of the "Dramatist;" *Vapid*, Ludlow; with the farce of "High Life below Stairs;" *My Lord Duke*, Ludlow; *Lovel*, Mr. Jones. Fifth night, the comedy of "Laugh when You Can;" *Gossamer*, Ludlow; farce, "Catharine and Petruchio;" *Petruchio*, Ludlow; *Catharine*, Mrs. Groshon. Sixth night, I varied the style of entertainment, and gave them Kotzebue's tragic play of the "Stranger," in which I enacted the character of the *Stranger*; *Mrs. Haller*, Mrs. Groshon; with an afterpiece entitled "Mat-

rimony ;" *Delaval*, Ludlow ; *Clara*, Mrs. Groshon. Between the play and afterpiece, I gave them one of Nicholson's popular airs, with variations, on the German flute, with orchestral accompaniments ; the latter was encored and repeated. At the end of the entire performance I was called for by the audience, and made a speech to them, in which I thanked my friends for the honor they had done me in attending my performances, and was making my bow to retire, when the martial figure of Col. Houston rose in front of me, amidst a circle of ladies, and said : " Mr. Ludlow, it is the general wish of the ladies and gentlemen present that you remain with us at least another week." I was a little at a loss, at first, what to say, as the request was quite unexpected to me ; but I told him that if the arrangements of Messrs. Collins & Jones would permit of it, it would afford me great pleasure to comply with the request. At that moment Mr. Jones stepped forward from behind the scenes, and addressing the audience, told them that he was happy to find that the wishes of the ladies and gentlemen present were so much in accordance with his own, and that he had intended to propose a reëngagement to me that very night, and that he had no doubt he would have the pleasure of announcing my reappearance on the Monday following. The audience gave two rounds of applause, and we bowed ourselves off the stage. The matter was soon settled between Mr. Jones and myself in regard to the reëngagement. I was to play six additional nights, upon the same terms as the previous six.

I commenced with the comedy of " Busybody," performing the character of *Marplot*, after which the farce of " The Weathercock ;" *Tristram Fickle*, Ludlow. Second night, the comedy of " A Way to get Married ;" *Tangent*, Ludlow ; and the farce of " Catharine and Petruchio," as before. Third night, the comedy of " The Soldier's Daughter ;" *Frank Heartall*, Ludlow ; *Governor Heartall*, Mr. Jones ; *Widow Cheerly*, Mrs. Groshon ; with the farce of the " Sprigs of Laurel ;" *Nipperkin*, Ludlow. Fourth night, the comedy of " She Stoops to Conquer ;" *Young Marlow*, Ludlow ; *Hardcastle*, Jones ; *Miss Hardcastle*, Mrs. Groshon ; with the farce of " The Hunter of the Alps," as before. Fifth night, the comedy of " Every One has a Fault ;" *Sir Robert Ramble*, Ludlow ; *Lady Elenor Irwin*, Mrs. Groshon ; *Solus*, Mr. Jones ; with the farce of " The Weathercock," as before. Sixth and last night, being my benefit, Shakespeare's historical play of " King Henry the Fourth " (first part), *Prince Hal*, Ludlow ; *Falstaff*, Jones, who performed the character well.

The house was filled to its utmost capacity, and at the conclusion I was called before the curtain, and there took leave of my friends, promising to give them a call again at no very distant day. I cleared by my entire engagement \$800, which was a large sum of money to make in those times in twelve nights of acting, in a town of not more than four thousand inhabitants.

While in Nashville I had been questioned several times by Mr. Jones in regard to St. Louis as a theatrical town, in which I thought I could discover a desire in him to visit the place. It was very evident to me he had some project in his head of forming a circuit in the West which should embrace Cincinnati and Nashville, and perhaps St. Louis. In Nashville and Cincinnati he had theatres already; in the latter town a new one, opened by his partner, Mr. Collins, and himself in the spring of 1820, and known as the Columbia Street Theatre. I told Mr. Jones that I was of the opinion that St. Louis would not at that time pay a company to travel far in order to reach it; that the time had not yet arrived for St. Louis to be an object in that way; that I had tried it, and that Mr. Drake had tried it also, and neither had found it profitable. Still I could perceive that he was inclined to test the place himself, and that he either thought I was purposely discouraging him in order to keep the town for my own purposes, or that perhaps my company had not been of the right quality, and that the people would come out to see what he considered a better one. I told him, finally, that if he wished to try St. Louis, there was no doubt in my mind of his being able to obtain the theatre from the Thespian Society; that they had ceased performing in it, and would doubtless be willing to rent it to him. Conversation on these points had been going on between us from the day of my beginning to play in his company, and at his suggestion I had written to Mr. Isaac N. Henry to know whether the theatre could be had, and if it could, upon what terms. In a few days after the termination of my reengagement Mr. Henry's letter arrived, bearing an answer that was satisfactory to Mr. Jones, and he made a proposal for me and my wife to perform with them in St. Louis, saying at the same time that he would also make an offer of engagement to Mr. Vos and wife, if they wished to join the company. Of this I assured him there was no doubt, as Mr. Vos was always anxious to play whenever an opportunity occurred.

Before bidding farewell to Nashville, I wish to say something in regard to the theatre I played in during this engagement of the fall of 1820. I have in my possession a pamphlet

professing to have been written by a Mr. James Rees, and published in Philadelphia in 1845, entitled "The Dramatic Authors of America." In this pamphlet the author has unconnectedly introduced, and, as it appears to me, forcibly dragged in a subject having no connection at all with the title and supposed object of his publication. In this case of forcible entry there is an attempt to give a history of theatres and actors in the Western and Southern portions of the United States; but his narrative is very erroneous, and if left uncontroverted, would be likely to do great injustice to certain parties ostracized by his act. I should not think of referring to this little book, did it not contain inaccurate and partial statements of the rise and progress of the Drama in the West; and these accounts the author professes to have obtained from Mr. James H. Caldwell. To me it seems strange that Mr. Caldwell should have made such declarations in regard to the Western theatres, when they conflict so much with what he must have known to be the facts in the different cases there set down. I shall notice one instance here, and may, perhaps, point out others hereafter.

Mr. Rees makes Mr. Caldwell say (page 55 of his pamphlet) that "In 1826 I built the Nashville theatre. * * * It cost twenty thousand dollars, ground included. * * * I borrowed two thousand dollars, in sums of one hundred dollars. * * * I built this theatre whilst performing with my company in *the old barn*." And Mr. Rees calls it a *barn* twice. Now, it so happens that I know something of this *barn*. It was built expressly for a theatre, by a French gentleman resident in Nashville, the name of whom I cannot now recollect; and when finished, was rented to Messrs. Collins & Jones, who opened it with a good dramatic company in the summer of 1820. With that company I performed in the fall of the same year,—the engagement of twelve nights previously spoken of in this chapter. This theatre had been visited for the season by intelligent and cultivated audiences, and I never heard any complaint of a lack of comfort or convenience in regard to the arrangements of the building. I performed in the same theatre again in the summer of 1823, in Mr. Caldwell's own company; Mr. Richard Russell, Sr., being the stage-manager and manager *pro tem* for the occasion. This theatre was situated on Cherry Street, west side, a short distance north of the Public Square. It was constructed with a pit and two tiers of boxes, in the usual style of building theatres in those days; would seat about eight hundred persons; and although small, compared with

the theatres of the present day, was quite large enough for the population of the town then, and for many years following. Calling this theatre a "barn" would have come with a very ill grace from Mr. Caldwell in that city, where the theatre *he* built and opened in 1826 was *never finished* internally, according to the original intention. I performed in this last-mentioned theatre in the summer of 1831, five years after its first opening. It was in a very unfinished condition then, and I believe nothing was ever done subsequently to improve it. If it were allowable to use the term "barn" in reference to either building, it would have been certainly more applicable to the theatre of 1826 than the one of 1820. But I consider it very unjustifiable in any one to call either of those theatres a "barn!"

As soon as Mr. Jones ascertained he could get the theatre at St. Louis, he began to make preparations for moving his company to that town. He gave some benefits to the prominent performers, and for some of them I played. We were all soon ready to undertake our journey; Mr. and Mrs. Jones and Mr. Groshon and wife deciding to go overland with me, the latter carrying her child, about eight months old, and making the journey in their own buggy, the former to go on horseback; the other members of the company—and they were not many—to go by keel-boat to the mouth of the Ohio River, and from there by the first boat ascending the Mississippi to St. Louis. In going back I took a different road, by advice, and crossed the Ohio River at Shawneetown, a small place about fifty miles above Golconda, the point at which I crossed in going to Nashville. We reached the west bank of the Ohio about four o'clock in the afternoon, and not wishing to stop so early, concluded to go on to a house we were told we could stop at, about ten miles from the river. On reaching this house we met with a melancholy disappointment; the head of the family had just then died, and the widow and children were all in tears, therefore could not entertain us. And, situated as they were, we could not urge them to receive us; nor did we feel like remaining there for the night, under the circumstances. Besides, they informed us there was another house about ten miles farther on; so we concluded to push ahead, although it would be after dark when we should reach there. We had proceeded probably five or six miles when a sudden storm came upon us,—a tornado that twisted trees, broke off limbs, and prostrated the dead trunks of others across our road, which lay through a dark and dreary forest. In one instance I was very near being

a victim of one of these monarchs of the wood. I heard a crash, looked up, and saw a tree falling apparently just over my head; heard a scream; at the same moment I struck my heels with all my might into my horse's sides; he sprang forward, and the tree fell so closely behind as to brush my horse in its descent. Mr. and Mrs. Jones were about twenty or thirty feet behind me; and it was Mrs. Jones who screamed, for she said she thought I would be surely crushed by the falling tree. Mr. Groshon, who was behind them, had to drive his horse into the woods in order to get his buggy past the prostrate monster. In about fifteen minutes the whirlwind had passed beyond us, and in a few minutes more a storm of rain set in, and it became quite dark in the woods, and no house was discernible. When darkness had completely closed around us we were forced to walk our horses, for we were afraid we should encounter some fallen timber and lame our horses or ourselves. In this manner we proceeded until patience had become exhausted, when we beheld through the darkness a small, distant light, towards which we made what haste we could, flattering ourselves that we had reached a shelter at last. But here again we were disappointed. Mr. Jones and I entered the cabin, which was one of the most uncomfortable I had ever seen, occupied by three of the roughest and most savage-looking fellows it was ever my lot to meet with, and as surly as they were unsightly. They told us in the fewest possible words that they could give us no food for either our horses or ourselves; that they had nothing but what they needed themselves; that there was no female about the place; that they were wood-cutters; that what they ate they cooked themselves, and fed no one but themselves. They said there was another house ten or twelve miles further on our way, where perhaps they might entertain us. Mr. Jones said he would go no further that night; in that house he should remain until the next morning; and told the men all he required of them was the shelter of their roof for himself and wife; that they were wet and cold, and that he did not believe there was a man there would turn a woman out of doors on such a night as that. To which one of them muttered something which Jones took for consent, so went to work to get his horses within their enclosed ground, and there they remained hitched under a tree until the next morning, without a mouthful of any thing to eat. Mr. and Mrs. Groshon were willing to go on, and as we found Jones determined to stop there, we told him to come on as soon as daylight appeared in the morning, and stop at the first house he came to; for

there we were determined to stop for the night, upon the best conditions 'twas possible to obtain.

By this time the rain had ceased, but the weather was very cold and the night very dark. I started off ahead, and told Groshon to keep close behind, and if possible I would inform him of any impediment or danger that might be in our track. We had not gone above a mile before I found my horse stirring up the leaves with his feet, as he walked slowly along, and I began to surmise I had got off the road. I called to Groshon to stop, while I dismounted and searched for the road; in doing which I led my horse by the bridle, and felt the way with my feet, sometimes with my hands, for it was too dark in the woods to see a yard ahead. Suddenly I slipped, and fell down a bank of probably ten feet in height, my horse jumping back and breaking from me. At the same moment I called out to Groshon that I was "all right," and told him to secure my horse. Fortunately the animal was, I believe, so frightened that he stood still and never attempted to run, and allowed Mr. Groshon to walk up to him, and when he put his hand upon him he said the horse was trembling. I soon found my way to the top of the bank again, hunted and felt around in the dark until I discovered a slope by which the carriage could safely reach the road below; then taking my horse by the bridle, led the way on foot, and Groshon, leading his horse in the same way, followed me.

Getting once more on the road, we began our movement as before, Groshon in his buggy and I on horseback. We had not gone far when I heard a rushing of water, as that of some rapid stream over a rocky bottom. I then proceeded with great caution, and in a few minutes reached a rapid stream, that seemed to run directly across our road, but of which I could discern but little; but from the sound I conjectured that, though swift, it probably would be found not very deep, — most likely a small creek swollen by the late heavy rain beyond its usual banks. There was no discernible place of crossing this water other than the point where the road we had come reached it. I advised Mr. Groshon not to cross until I had tried the depth and strength of the water. I felt confident that my horse could swim with me, should the stream prove too deep or too strong for his foothold; and if I should strike the road on the other side, and not an abrupt bank, there was little doubt of my getting to the other side in safety. I should then be enabled to state what he might expect to encounter, and if necessary assist him. This was assented to, and I immediately urged my horse into the rushing stream.

When about half-way across, as I conjectured, I found my feet in the water, and in a minute after the water was even with the seat of my saddle. Still the horse kept his feet, and moved slowly and steadily forward, and very soon I found was lifting me gradually above the torrent that with sullen murmurs hurried past me. Being once on the other side, the next undertaking was to get my friend, his wife, and child safely over. The stream was not very wide, and we could easily converse across it; so I told Mr. Groshon to wait till I could come back, and I would then lead the way for him, as I should have learned something of it, and could direct his course in driving. I soon plunged in again, and reached the other side in safety, the horse evincing more confidence than in the previous crossing. My fears, though not uttered, were that possibly the force of the stream might overturn the buggy, throw the occupants out, and although the lady and child could be got to shore, without doubt, in that narrow stream, yet the horse might be drowned, being entangled with harness and the carriage, and this would prove a very serious matter, situated as we then were. Reflecting on this while recrossing, I told Mr. Groshon in the event of any accident, to take care of his wife, and I would look to the safety of the child. I apprehended that Mrs. Groshon might object to cross, fearing to run the apparent risk; but she was a woman of spirit and judgment, and said she might as well encounter that risk as the one which otherwise would be likely to follow, — that of perishing with the cold by remaining exposed all night to the open air. So I proceeded to lead the way. When about half-way over, Mrs. Groshon began to call out, "The water is on my feet." "Get up on the seat," said I. This she did, holding her baby in her arms; Groshon standing up and quietly and slowly driving his horse, taking my occasional directions "to the right" or "to the left," and thus in a few minutes we were safely over, not much more wet than we had been made by the rain. Thinking ourselves lucky in thus getting safely over the river, we pushed forward on our journey with revived spirits, and in about an hour or more reached our long-sought-for house of refuge.

It was about midnight, and I felt that we *must* gain admittance by some means at this house; for, being wet and cold, as they were, I feared that Mrs. Groshon and her child were in imminent danger of being ill. So leaving my friends in their buggy standing in the road, and giving into the hands of Mr. Groshon the bridle-reins of my horse, I crossed the stile at the front fence and proceeded to the house, standing some fifty

feet back, knocked at the door, and a man's voice answered, "Who's there?" and "What do you want?" I told him we were benighted travellers, wet and weary, and craved the shelter of his roof for the night. He replied that he "could not accommodate us;" that they had "no beds to spare." I told him we would be content with any thing, and begged of him to open the door; but all in vain, for he persisted in refusing. Thinking it hopeless, I was walking back to my horse, when an idea occurred to me, and I determined to make one more effort; so walked back to the house and knocked again, and again another demand came, of "What do you want?" I told him we were only a small party, two men, a woman, and an infant, and that the child was perishing with the cold. Presently I heard another voice, speaking in an undertone, which I concluded to be that of a woman; then I felt I was sure of my object. I thought it likely that she was a mother, and if she was, she could not withstand my last appeal. The door shortly after was opened, and a woman in a linsey-woolsey dress, hurriedly put on, presented herself, and thus addressed me: "You say you have a woman and a baby with you? Well, I spose you *must* come in, then." The stratagem succeeded. I had reached the mother's heart! The silver cord had been touched, and it vibrated in sweet harmony to the melody of sympathy and love! I could not help, as I reached the carriage, exclaiming, in the words of *Rolla*, in the tragedy of "Pizarro," "Oh! holy Nature, thou dost never plead in vain!"

We found our host and hostess kinder than we had expected. The mistress of the house furnished us with some warm coffee, and bacon and eggs, of which we partook freely; also a bed to Groshon and wife, by removing one from their own.

For myself, I was contented with the softest plank I could find in the floor, with my overcoat for cover and my saddle for a pillow. Thus situated, with my feet to the fire, I slept soundly until sunrise, when I was awakened by our hostess, that she might have access to the fire-place in order to get our breakfast. There were but two rooms in the log cabin, — one used for a bed-room, and the other for kitchen and parlor. About the time breakfast was ready, our friends Mr. and Mrs. Jones joined us, quite exhausted with fatigue and want of sleep. Mr. Jones informed me that he had not closed his eyes the entire night, but had sat upon the floor of the log cabin with his back against a wall and his hands upon his pistols, one in each breast-pocket of his overcoat. Mrs. Jones had slept but little, waking at short intervals with frightful

dreams of being assassinated by dreadful-looking men. Our party breakfasted together, and enjoyed the meal better than any one we had eaten, within our recollection, in the best city hotels, horseback riding being better than "Hostetter's Bitters" to sharpen the appetite, and far more wholesome. Our breakfast over, we asked our host what we had to pay, — supper for three at midnight, breakfast for five in the morning, and six feeds for four horses. After studying over it for a few minutes, he said he "did not like to charge any thing," but asked us if we thought "four dollars would be too much?" We told him no, it was not enough, and handed him five dollars. This at first he refused to take, and I think would have insisted on returning one dollar, but he could not make the sum up in the small change he had.

Here was a man who, the night previous, I had condemned in my heart to be an unfeeling brute, turning out to be a "good Samaritan." It was a lesson to me not to pass sentence on any one till the case has had a fair hearing. He told us that some persons in his county had been robbed by men travelling only at night, and who could not be found in the daytime; therefore they were unwilling to admit those that called after dark. Taking leave of our host and hostess, whom we found very kind persons notwithstanding our first reception, we once more started on our way.

Nothing occurred worthy of note during the remainder of our journey, and we reached St. Louis about the eighth day after leaving Nashville, all well, and with excellent appetites. Even the child seemed improved in health by the travel.

CHAPTER XXI.

Jones's Company in St. Louis, 1820 — John Dauberman — Grand Tableau of the Washington Family — A Steamboat at St. Louis — Author starts for New Orleans on her — Author engages in Caldwell's Company — Company embark for Virginia — Merry Times — Daddy Winter — Rough Weather — Vessel comes near being wrecked — Put on Short Allowance — Forty-two Days in getting to the Capes of Virginia.

MATTERS were soon arranged for the occupancy of the theatre by Mr. Jones and his company, who commenced the season about the 10th of December, 1820, with the comedy of the "Soldier's Daughter," cast as follows: *Governor Heartall*, Mr. Jones; *Frank Heartall*, Ludlow; *Charles Woodly*, Lewis; *Young Malfort*, Vos; *Ferret*, Cargill; *Timothy Quaint*, Frethy; *Servant*, Pilley; *Widow Cheerly*, Mrs. Groshon; *Mrs. Malfort*, Mrs. Ludlow; *Susan*, Mrs. Vos. Mr. Groshon was not an actor; he was treasurer and ticket-seller for the company, and, as I understood, partner with Mr. Jones, sharing with him the profits and losses of the adventure.

This season of management by Mr. Jones in St. Louis was short and unprofitable, and a mere repetition of what I had previously experienced. He soon saw it would not answer his purpose to remain long in the town; nor would it be worth the trouble and expense of so long a journey again. About the middle of February, 1821, Mr. Jones determined to bring the season to a close, and with this in view commenced giving "benefits" to such persons as were likely to draw into the house the expenses of a night's performance. Mr. and Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Groshon, Mr. and Mrs. Ludlow, Mr. Vos, and Mr. Dauberman were the names decided on for benefits. Of these persons, Mr. Jones, Mrs. Groshon, Mrs. Ludlow, and Mr. Dauberman were the lucky ones. As for myself, I cleared about twenty-five dollars; this result was probably in consequence of the inclemency of the weather, for on my night there was the most terrific storm of snow, rain, and sleet I ever witnessed, and I was surprised that any person came to the theatre. Those that did come were principally my personal friends, — at least, I considered them as

such; for, as some play-writer says, "He's a friend who will go out in a storm to serve you."

About the time the benefits were being adjusted, Mr. Dauberman applied for permission to put his name up on such a night as the management would designate, and for which he was willing to insure a definite sum, such as should be mutually agreed upon, as charges for the night. This was arranged and the night named. Mr. Dauberman had previously had a conversation with my wife and myself on the subject of presenting a species of entertainment entirely new to the stage at that day, at least in the West. The subject of the entertainment was suggested to him by what he considered an extraordinary resemblance of three persons in the company to the originals of a picture that he proposed to present to the public in a *tableau vivant*. This picture was "Washington and his Family," of which hundreds of engravings from the original painting are in possession of the people of the United States at this day. I have previously mentioned the great likeness of Mr. Cargill to Gen. Washington, as we have his face from Gilbert Stuart's painting; and Mrs. Ludlow was found to be by Mr. Dauberman an equally strong likeness of Mrs. Martha Custis Washington; so also was Miss Seymour a good likeness of Miss Custis, the step-daughter of President Washington. The fourth figure in the picture, the colored servant, Mr. Dauberman undertook himself. Mr. D. was to bear all expenses that were proper and necessary for that peculiar part of the entertainment, such as dresses, etc., and would paint a scene expressly for it, representing the background of the picture, which he was quite competent to do, being a very clever artist,—in fact, a man of no ordinary genius. When the night came the house was crowded to an inconvenient fulness, and all were anxious to discover what the peculiar performance was in which they were to have an exhibit of "Washington and his Family." As soon as all was ready for the tableau, the band in the orchestra began the national air of "Hail Columbia," the curtain rose, strong white lights from behind the scenes threw a bright halo around the figures, and for a few moments there was the silence of astonishment,—then came a thunder of applause that sensibly shook the building. I do not believe I ever beheld as much rapture displayed by an audience in my whole life. The picture was presented three times that night to gratify the audience, who seemed unwilling even then to leave the theatre. I will only observe further, it was repeated the next play-night for Mrs. Ludlow's benefit, which

had been previously arranged for that night, and the house was again full. Mr. Jones gave one more night, the closing night of the season, when the tableau was again repeated, the closing night being a full house, but leaving the management an empty treasury. Nevertheless, Mr. Jones settled squarely with all his company, and I believe with every person who had dealings with him during his sojourn in the town.

Early in the month of March Mr. Jones started for Cincinnati, there to join his former partner, Mr. Joshua Collins, taking with him those of his company who came from Nashville as such, and leaving Messrs. Vos, Finlay, and Frethy in St. Louis. He offered myself and wife engagements for Cincinnati; but at that time I had other, and, as I thought, more desirable objects in the coming future in another direction.

Mr. Collins had not for many years enjoyed good health; he had become so bare of flesh that he might almost have been termed a living skeleton; and not long after Mr. Jones and himself separating, he died and was buried at Versailles, Kentucky, a small town about fifteen miles from Lexington, where he had been residing. Mr. Jones and wife proceeded eastward, playing on their way at Pittsburg, with a small company, which was soon disbanded for lack of support, Mr. and Mrs. Jones proceeding to Philadelphia. This was about the beginning of the summer of 1824. The next time I met Mr. Jones, it was in New York, May, 1828, when I performed for his benefit, at the Park Theatre, the character of *Ferment*, in the comedy of the "School of Reform;" Mr. Gray, of New Orleans, playing *General Turagon*; Mr. Thomas Hilson, *Bob Tyke*; and Mrs. Hilson, *Mrs. Ferment*. In the year 1831, Mr. Jones, Mr. Duffy, and Mr. William Forrest (brother of the great tragedian, Edwin Forrest), as partners, rented the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, where for a season or two they did a fine business. Mr. and Mrs. Jones have been dead many years, the former dying at the residence of his friend, Edwin Forrest. They were worthy people, and an honor to their profession. We will now return to my personal narrative.

After the departure of Mr. Jones and company, finding myself free from any professional engagements, I resolved to put into execution my long-cherished notion of visiting Pensacola, with the view of ascertaining whether it could afford any inducements for me to become a permanent resident there. About this time a steamboat arrived at St. Louis from Louisville, bound to New Orleans. I went on board this boat, saw the captain, a very civil and kind man, and engaged passage for myself and wife to New Orleans. Arriving in New Or-

leans, I encountered my friend of 1817-18, Nathan Morse, Esq., who seemed much surprised and gratified to meet me. He inquired what my visit to New Orleans at that time of the year meant; and when I informed him of the ultimate object I had in view, which was to visit Pensacola, and the possibility of my settling there, he strenuously urged me to abandon the idea; said it would never answer my purpose, and advised me to keep on in the line of my profession; and as an inducement to do so, told me that he was sure that Mr. James H. Caldwell, the manager then of the theatre (American), would be glad to engage me; that certain friends of mine in New Orleans had frequently mentioned my name to him, and that Mr. Caldwell, he thought, would be disposed to offer me liberal terms to become a permanent member of his company; concluding by offering to introduce me to that gentleman, with whom he was on terms of intimacy. I told him I should be pleased to make the acquaintance of Mr. Caldwell, and we agreed upon an hour the next day when we would proceed together to that gentleman's office. I found Mr. Caldwell very pleasant, and before leaving him we had agreed upon terms for me to open and perform a few nights; when, if desirable to both, and terms suited, I was to join his company. Three nights after, I made my appearance, it being my second season in New Orleans, Mr. Caldwell at that time occupying the French theatre. This occurred in April, 1821. My opening characters were *Fitz-James*, in the drama of "The Lady of the Lake," and *Young Wilding*, in the farce of "The Liar." The first was by no means a part of my choosing, but Mr. Caldwell had been getting the piece ready, with expectation of producing it immediately, when a difficulty occurred between himself and a young gentleman of his company who was to have performed *Fitz-James*, and the part lost the anticipated representative. *Young Wilding* was a favorite part with me, and although Mr. Caldwell had performed the character two or three times that season,—and he played it well, as I afterwards saw,—yet the people were kind enough to give me a very fine reception, and a hearty welcome to the scene of my early adventures. In about a month from the time of this first appearance, namely, on the 20th of May, 1821, my wife presented me with our second child,—a girl. Ever since my marriage I had wished for a daughter, and I now had my desire gratified; and, like *Virginius* of old, according to Sheridan Knowles's tragedy, I "thanked Heaven for a blessing," and she has proved such to me; and I thank God that she yet lives, and still proves the same.

I will now give, as near as I can recollect, the names of the persons composing Mr. Caldwell's company in April, 1821. Mr. James H. Caldwell, manager, and leading actor in tragedy and comedy. Mr. Caldwell was a very fine actor in genteel comedy, but I never admired his tragedy, with a few exceptions. N. M. Ludlow, juvenile tragedy and first genteel comedy, when not played by the manager; Richard Russell, stage-manager and low-comedy actor; Thomas Burke, first old men and a portion of low comedy. This gentleman was a very excellent actor in every thing he attempted. Jackson Gray, principal old men in some instances, and second in others; he was queer and droll in his style, but his old men were all alike. Arthur F. Keene was a very fine singer of the old English comic opera, and performed such characters as *Count Belino*, in the "Devil's Bridge," *John of Paris*, and the like. Thomas Jefferson was a very correct actor, always at ease on the stage, but weak and pointless in his acting. The other men — Mr. Joseph Hutton, heavy tragedy and dignified fathers; W. H. Benton, seconds to the last; James Scholes, general utility — were merely passable in their lines. For the ladies, Mrs. Cornelia Burke, principal singer and first comedy "romps," was decidedly the best actress in the company. She was unsurpassed in her singing of "ballads," or in English opera, by any one then in the United States; and her *Sophia*, in the "Road to Ruin," a forward school-girl, and *Prescilla Tomboy*, in the farce of the "Romp," I have never seen equalled by any one. Mrs. Russell was just then the leading lady in tragedy and comedy, but was hardly equal to sustaining the characters that circumstances, and not inclination, had placed her in. She was a very pretty woman, with brilliant black eyes, and proved afterwards very effective in soubrettes and handsome widows, which she performed for many years in the different theatres of the South and West. Miss Eliza Tilden was the juvenile tragedy and sentimental comedy lady, and showed a promise of considerable dramatic power; and although possessing a faultless form, had a face not capable of much expression, and her mouth was not pretty. She married not many years after this time, and retired from the stage. Miss Eliza Placide, general respectable utility young ladies. She was quite young and unpractised in 1821; but she had the hereditary talent of the Placide family, and had she not have married early and left the stage, would have achieved a dramatic fame probably quite equal to that of her talented brothers and sisters. She was an amiable young lady, and became a good wife and a kind mother. She first married

a Mr. Louis Asberry, a young merchant of New York ; after his death she married a Mr. Sheridan Mann, who kept a gymnasium in Boston, who died not long after their marriage. She has a daughter now — or not long since — on the stage, known as Miss Alice Placide, but whose real name is Mann, daughter of the second husband just spoken of. Mrs. Hutton was tolerable in old women ; Mrs. Gray, young and pretty in the *namby-pamby* stage misses.

Mr. Caldwell closed his season in New Orleans about the end of the third week in May, and active preparations were at once made to embark by sea for Virginia, where Mr. C. proposed to commence his summer campaign in the city of Petersburg. In a few days a vessel had been engaged by the manager to convey the whole of his company to City Point, on James River, Virginia ; and I had either to go in that vessel or abandon my engagement for the summer. Having been dissuaded by my friend, Mr. Morse, out of the notion of going to Pensacola, I saw no way left for me but to embark with Mr. C.'s company ; and although my infant daughter was only a week old, my wife, being a strong and healthy woman, said she was very able to undertake the voyage ; so procuring a carriage, I carefully removed her and the child to the vessel, and in four days more we were out in the Gulf of Mexico. This voyage was far from being pleasant. The vessel on which we were embarked, a small schooner, was badly provisioned, and the conveniences for sleeping were deficient. My wife had a berth quite too small for herself and infant ; for myself I had none, and had it not been that Mrs. Burke was good enough to exchange berths with her, my wife must have been seriously incommoded. This lady was very kind during the voyage, and assisted my wife with the cheerfulness and attention of a sister ; therefore, as a small return for such disinterested friendship, the child was named after her. I believe I have said in a former chapter that this lady afterwards became Mrs. Jefferson, and the mother of the great American comedian of the day, Mr. Joseph Jefferson. Mrs. Jefferson was a woman of warm and kindly sympathies, and an honor to her sex and her profession. She has been dead many years, leaving only two children, a son and a daughter, both in the profession of the "stage."

It is pretty well understood, I believe, that actors are the merriest people, under difficulties, of any class of beings on earth ; all personal inconveniences that they cannot remedy they convert into some sort of fun ; of this we had an illustration in our voyage from New Orleans to the capes of Virginia.

Of the large number of passengers in the small schooner, all were members of Mr. Caldwell's company, in various capacities, excepting one man, a Mr. Winter, an old planter, originally from North Carolina, but at that time a farmer of Louisiana. This old man was of a social disposition, and soon became a favorite with many of the company, who used to call him "Daddy Winter." He had on board the vessel a considerable quantity of sugar and molasses, products of his own plantation, which he was taking to Virginia to sell. "Daddy Winter" had never been "out at sea" in all his life, and did not appear to have a very definite idea of what it was. We were, I think, two days and two nights descending the Mississippi River to the mouth, called the "Balize," about one hundred and twenty miles by the river. At night, while on the river, we came to, and tied up to the shore, the captain being unwilling to proceed, as the river was crooked and he did not understand very well how to navigate it. There were no "tow-boats" at that day, as there are now, by means of which vessels are taken from the levee at New Orleans to the gulf in a few hours.

I think it was in the afternoon of our third day from the city that we got out into the gulf, with a fine, "smacking breeze" "right aft." We had a beautiful run that night, but the next day a storm came on, which increased until matters became no longer funny; in short, we were for three days in a gale of wind with scarcely a rag of sail standing, "dead-lights" in, helm lashed down, waves breaking over us all the time, and the vessel at the mercy and control of the wind and waves. This was succeeded by a perfect lull of the wind, but a rough sea lashing itself to a calm, and nearly rolling the masts of the vessel overboard. During this rough time many were sea-sick, of course; but, strange to say, although the first sea-voyage of my wife and myself, neither of us were sick; but poor old "Daddy Winter" was very ill. Stretched upon deck, on the flat of his back, lashed fast to keep him from rolling into the scuppers, he would groan and swear, and say, "Oh! if my Jinny was only here to give me a cup of buttermilk and some sweet tatters [potatoes] I'd soon be all right."

During the storm the captain could not "take the sun," and he was consequently "loose in his reckonings." In short, we were drifting about without knowing exactly where we were; until towards sundown one day, when I was standing looking over the side of the vessel, I discovered a change in the color of the water from the usual blue of the gulf to a

white and milky appearance. Of this I apprised the captain, who was below taking his evening meal; but he said I must be mistaken. However, not being satisfied in my own mind, I resumed my position at the side of the vessel, and in a few minutes the water had become much whiter. I took the place of the sailor at the helm, and asked him to look at the water; he gave a glance at it, sprang to the "companion-way," and shouted, "*White water*, captain!" The captain came hastily on deck, and immediately ordered "About ship!" when she "veered," and "stood off" on almost an opposite point of the compass to that we had been running. The fact of the matter was, we made a very narrow escape of being wrecked on the "Florida Keys;" and the change in the appearance of the water was caused by the white sand of the "Keys," which appears as vessels begin to near the shore.

About this time Jackson Gray, who was always fond of teasing old "Daddy Winter," came along near him and said, "Daddy, get up; we are going ashore." "By the Lord, I am glad of that," said "old Daddy." "But," says Gray, "if the vessel *strands* you'll loose all your sugar and molasses." "I don't care a d—n," said Daddy. "If I can only *git* on shore I don't care what the h—l becomes of the *sweetnin'*."

By the time we had been out fifteen days, the secret leaked out we were getting short of provisions and water, and there was talk of putting us on an allowance of both. Fortunately, about this time a sail hove in sight, standing toward us, and we insisted upon hailing her, for the purpose of endeavoring to obtain some provisions which, after some plain talking to the owner of our schooner, who was on board with us, he consented to do. The vessel hailed proved to be the schooner "Felix," of Baltimore. They let us have all they could spare, which was not much, and then stood on their course. Three days after we were put on an allowance of water, and in a week more had come down to an allowance of "salt-junk" and "sea-biscuit." In short, there never was a more gross and diabolical swindle put off upon a body of people; and when the owner was told this by one of the company, the only excuse he gave was that Mr. Caldwell had screwed him down so close on the rates he was willing to allow for the passage of his company that he was not able to afford more or better than he had done. There was an intention among us to lynch the owner as soon as we got him on shore; but he getting "wind" of it, as we supposed, as soon as the vessel came off City Point he went ashore in the small boat, to get provisions, as he said; but when the boat came back, some provisions were

there, but the owner had disappeared, and I never heard that he was seen by any member of the company afterwards. We were forty-two days making this trip from New Orleans to City Point; and had it not been for the jovial party we had on board, it would, as *Dogberry* says, have been "tolerable, and not to be endured."

CHAPTER XXII.

Company arrive at Petersburg—Theatre Opens—Mrs. Gilfert as a Star—Mr. Holman and his Daughter, Mrs. Giltert—Junius B. Booth's First Engagement in America—A Small Man appears—the *Small Man* a Great Actor—Doubts and Disgust changed to Admiration—Mr. Booth in the Character of *Sir Edward Mortimer*—Mrs. Waring—Season closes—Company go to Norfolk—Thomas A. Cooper, the Tragedian—Company return by Sea to New Orleans—Thomas Hilson—J. B. Booth makes his First Appearance in New Orleans—Disappointment ending in Enthusiasm—Complete Triumph—A Deputation of French Gentlemen wait on Mr. Booth to bespeak a Tragedy—Mr. Booth consents to play *Orestes*—The French Audience Delighted—Explanation of an Error—Thomas A. Cooper's First Engagement in New Orleans.

It was about the middle of July before we were ready to open the theatre at Petersburg, Virginia. The company consisted of the same persons enumerated by me at the conclusion of the New Orleans season, with the exception of Mr. Caldwell, who had gone to Virginia by the interior land-route, and Mr. and Mrs. Burke, who left us on our arrival at Petersburg, and went to Philadelphia, where, in the fall they joined the theatrical company of Messrs. Wood & Warren, and remained with them until Mr. Burke's death, which occurred at Baltimore, June 6, 1825.

I do not remember of what play and farce our opening performance consisted at Petersburg; but for the first week or ten days we played only the best old comedies, in which I had an opportunity of appearing in some of my favorite characters. About the second week of the season, Mrs. Gilfert arrived to fulfil a "star" engagement of two weeks. I had not seen this lady since she was Miss Holman, and came with her father to perform an engagement in the Albany theatre, New York, where I had the honor, for that occasion only, of being a performer (amateur) in the same play with her, as one of the attendants who come on the stage to take charge of *King Lear* and his daughter, *Cordelia*. At that time I was a "stage-struck" youth, admitted behind the scenes, and glad to get on the stage, no matter how humble the position. The next time I was on the stage with this lady was during this Petersburg "star" engagement, when I had the honor of performing her lover, the gallant, gay *Lothario*, in the tragedy of

the "Fair Penitent,"—rather an important advance with me in the intervening years.

I hope the reader will excuse a short digression here, and bear with me, while I give something more than a passing notice of this lady and her distinguished father. Joseph George Holman, the father of Mrs. Gilfert, was born in England, in the year 1763; was a descendant of Sir John Holman, Baronet of Warkeworth Castle, Banbury; was educated at Queen's College, Oxford, and intended by his friends for the Church. Very much against the wishes of those friends, he appeared on a public stage, in the character of *Romeo*, at Covent Garden Theatre, in 1784. His reception was said to be in the highest degree flattering. He arrived in the United States with his daughter in the fall of 1812. In Albany I had the pleasure of witnessing several performances of Mr. and Miss Holman. Their representation of *Lord and Lady Townly*, in the comedy of the "Provoked Husband," was highly artistic and beautiful; and in "King Lear," where I was on the stage as one of the attendants, their acting was so beautiful and touching as father and daughter, that my eyes filled with tears, so that I could hardly see my way on the stage. Mr. Holman made two or three unsuccessful efforts at "managing" theatres in this country, and would probably have done much towards elevating the Drama, had he been possessed of *business* qualities; but he was not a good financial manager, and his last efforts in conducting a theatre, at Charleston, South Carolina, involved and disheartened him. He suddenly died of apoplexy, at Rockaway, Long Island, August 24, 1817.

Miss Holman was a young lady of grace and beauty, and had a more than ordinary share of natural talent for the stage. She married Mr. Charles Gilfert in 1815, a gentleman of considerable talent as a pianist and composer, and for many years manager of the theatre at Richmond, Virginia, and of the Bowery Theatre, New York. He was a bold and venturesome man in business, but careless and loose in the details of it; and died suddenly, under great excitement of mind, occasioned by the burning of his theatre, and embarrassments attending in consequence, on the 30th of July, 1829. On the 17th of August following, a benefit was given to Mrs. Gilfert at the Park Theatre, which was said to have been well attended by the best society of New York.

During the month of August, 1821, one of the brightest "stars" in the Western dramatic horizon presented itself in the person of Junius Brutus Booth,—*the* Booth,—who, accom-

panied by his wife, arrived at Norfolk, Virginia, in a vessel from the island of Madeira. Why he came to the United States at the time, and in the way he did, unheralded and unknown, I have never been informed. He presented himself to Mr. Gilfert, the Richmond manager, and said he wished to perform in that city. I understood he had no letters of introduction, and there were some doubts whether he was the *real* Booth, or some impudent adventurer, who, having heard that Mr. Booth contemplated visiting America, took this peculiar way of introducing himself, and, if possible, "humbugging" the Yankees before the real Booth should arrive. The Richmond manager, always ready for some bold and unusual adventure, arranged with Mr. Booth for *one night*, and a conditional extension of the engagement. Mr. Booth made his first appearance in the United States there and at that time in "Richard III." Mr. Richard Russell, who was acting as manager of the Petersburg theatre in the absence of Mr. Caldwell, happened to hear of the appearance of a Mr. Booth in Richmond, and went to that city to ascertain who the person was assuming that name, and came back highly pleased with the man, saying he had engaged him to play *one night* in Petersburg, then to finish his engagement in Richmond, and return to Petersburg for a number of nights. He had selected "Richard III." for his first appearance in Petersburg. The play was cast and put up in the green-room, and the night on which it was to be performed stated. On the morning of the day set apart, the large bills posted on the corner of the streets announced "the first appearance of the great tragedian, J. B. Booth, from the London theatres, Covent Garden, and Drury Lane." The play was called for rehearsal at ten o'clock, A. M.; at the proper time the rehearsal commenced, but without Mr. Booth. He had not arrived; but the manager said the rehearsal must go on, and he would have Mr. Booth's scenes rehearsed after he arrived. I think they had reached the fourth act of the play, and I was sauntering near the head of the stairs that led up to the stage, when a small man, that I took to be a well-grown boy of about sixteen years of age, came running up the stairs, wearing a round-about jacket, and a cheap straw-hat, both covered with dust, and inquired for the stage-manager. I pointed across the stage to Mr. Russell, who at that moment had observed the person with whom I was conversing, and hurried towards us, and cordially grasping the hand of the strange man, said: "Ah! Mr. Booth; I am glad you have arrived; we were fearful something serious had happened to you." I do not think any man was ever

more astonished than I was just then in beholding this meeting. Is it possible this can be the great Mr. Booth, that Mr. Russell says is "undoubtedly the best actor living?" and I began to think Russell was trying to put off some joke upon us all. I observed, however, that when the small man came upon the stage to rehearse his scenes, he was quite "at home," and showed a knowledge of the business of the character that a mere novice or pretender could not have acquired. He ran through the rehearsal very carelessly, gave very few special or peculiar directions, tried the combat of the last act over twice, and said, "That will do," and the rehearsal was over. He then told Mr. Russell that he had been a few minutes too late for the stage-coach that left Richmond early in the morning, and that he soon after started on foot, and had walked all the way, — *twenty-five miles*; that his wardrobe had been sent to the stage-office before he was up; had been taken by the coach, and he supposed was ready in the city for the proper claimant.

When the curtain rose at night all the company were on the alert to see the supposed great actor make his entrance before the audience. When the proper scene opened Mr. Booth walked on the stage, made no recognition of the reception applause, and in an apparently meditative mood began the soliloquy of "Now is the winter of our discontent," which he delivered with seeming indifference, and with little if any point, something after the manner of a school-boy repeating a lesson of which he had learned the words, but was heedless of their meaning; and then made his exit, without receiving any additional applause. I was not where I could ascertain the impression made upon the audience, but on the stage, at the side-scenes, the actors were looking at each other in all kinds of ways, expressive of astonishment and disgust. I was standing near Mr. Benton, an old actor, the *King Henry* of the evening, and as I turned to go away, he said, "What do you think of him, Mr. Ludlow?" "Think," I replied, "why I think, as I thought before, that he is an imposter!" "What do *you* think of him?" "Why, sir," said Benton, "if the remainder of his *Richard* should prove like the beginning, I have never yet, I suppose, seen the character played, for it is unlike any I ever saw; it may be very good, but I don't fancy it." I found that among the company, generally, a like estimate of the great man prevailed, Mr. Russell being the only exception; he, having witnessed Mr. Booth's acting at Richmond, still persisted in saying he was the greatest actor he had ever seen. His scene with *Lady Anne*, where he encounters

and interrupts the funeral procession of *King Henry VI.*, was as tame and pointless as his first soliloquy. I had seen George Frederick Cooke perform *Richard III.* about ten years prior to the time that I saw Mr. Booth first, at which period I was a youth of sixteen years of age, when impressions are vivid and lasting, and I had retained a perfect recollection of the effects Mr. Cooke produced on the audience, myself included; and it seemed to me that no *great* actor would pass through these two scenes with that careless indifference that Mr. Booth evinced. It has ever remained a mystery to me why Mr. Booth *always* slighted the first two acts of *Richard III.*, and I can only account for it on the supposition that it was with the view of reserving his powers for the remaining three acts, in which considerable physical as well as mental efforts are required; and yet, when I first met Mr. Booth, he did not appear to be deficient in *physique*. I retained my first impression of Mr. Booth until he came to the fourth act, where, in a scene with *Buckingham*, he hints at the murder of the young princes. Then I thought I discovered something worthy of a great actor. From that on his acting was unique and wonderful! I had never seen any one produce such effects, and come so near my ideas of the character; not even Mr. Cooke, who was as far below Mr. Booth in the last two acts as he was above him in the first three. When the curtain fell upon the finishing of the play, there was a burst of applause from audience and actors such as I will venture to say Petersburg never knew before, nor has known since. After this one night's performance Mr. Booth returned to Richmond, finished his engagement there, and then came again to Petersburg, and played six or eight nights to crowded and delighted audiences.

I hope that the reader will not think me tedious or over-enthusiastic if I relate something more in regard to this gentleman, whom I have long considered was one of the great lights of the stage, until age and infirmities impaired his faculties. On Mr. Booth's return to Petersburg he commenced his engagement with Colman's play of the "Iron Chest," in which he performed the character of *Sir Edward Mortimer*, and I had the pleasure of playing with him his secretary, *Wilford*; and here let me state an effect produced on me at that time which half a century has not been able to obliterate, and that will keep its place "while memory holds a seat in this distracted globe." In the play there is a scene where *Sir Edward* attempts to disclose to *Wilford* a secret which he had securely kept from the world for years, — a *murder* for which

he had been tried and acquitted, and at the trial the course of justice had been disturbed by cries of "innocent!" ere the verdict had been declared. In this scene the struggle between his pride and shame, from the necessity of making this youth *Wilford*—his secretary, the creature of his bounty—the depository of this astounding secret, was so terrifically wrought up and so magnificently portrayed that I was brought to a "stand-still" upon the stage, in wonderment of the man's great tragic powers, and only recovered my self-possession when Mr. Booth said, in an undertone, "Go on, go on!" I never had such an effect produced on me by any other person's acting, in the whole course of my dramatic career. Mr. Booth had at that time the finest stage-face I ever met with; its splendid contour had not been marred by the breaking of what is commonly called the "bridge of the nose," and his eyes, of which he made great use in acting, were brilliant and expressive,—as *Hamlet* says, "an eye like Mars, to threaten and command."

During the vacation of our season we were visited by Mrs. Waring, who came, as I understood, for the purpose of making an engagement for her younger sister, Miss Jane Placide, who wished to join Mr. Caldwell's company for the ensuing New Orleans season. Mrs. Waring was Caroline, the eldest of the children of Mons. Alexander Placide, and was born in Charleston, South Carolina. By her first husband, Mr. Waring, an Englishman and an actor, she had a daughter named Anne, who married James W. Wallack, Jr., cousin of Lester Wallack. Mrs. Waring becoming a widow, married a William Rufus Blake, in 1826, an actor and a gentleman, well known in the theatres of the Eastern States, who died in Boston in 1863. Mrs. Waring effected the engagement for her sister, who joined the company at Norfolk.

Our season in Petersburg was not successful. With the exception of the nights of Mrs. Gilfert and those of Mr. Booth, the performances in that city were poorly attended; indeed, it has not since sustained the theatre well, even to the present day. Mr. Caldwell closed his season here about the 1st of November, and took his company to Norfolk. On our way, at City Point, we were joined by some new recruits: Miss Jane Placide, Mrs. Baker, Miss Seymour, and Mr. and Mrs. Bloxton. At Norfolk we had the further addition to our company of Mr. and Mrs. Hughes, both very clever performers. Mrs. Hughes was formerly Mrs. Young, and when I first saw her, was the leading lady of the Albany (New York) theatre, in 1813-14, under the management of Mr. John Bernard. Let

not this lady be confounded with the "pretty Mrs. Young," whose maiden name was Forster, and who married Charles Young; nevertheless the former was quite good-looking, and very amiable. This lady's first husband was known by the shocking name of "Cockey Young," a miserable specimen of humanity, and the very opposite of the second husband, Mr. Hughes, who was a remarkably fine-looking man. Miss Jane Placide was a very handsome brunette, with brilliant and expressive eyes, and altogether an interesting actress. Miss Rosina Seymour was in appearance the very opposite of Miss Placide, being a blonde with mild and melting blue eyes; was very interesting as a comedy young lady, and a very pattern of prudence and amiability. Mrs. Baker was a blooming young widow of about twenty-seven years of age, with a handsome face of the Roman female mould; her appearance was very fine for queenly characters, but her talent was quite limited. Mr. and Mrs. Bloxton were utility people, of not much force in acting. Mr. Hughes was a very clever actor in heavy tragedy characters, and gentlemanly fathers in comedy.

Mr. Thomas A. Cooper played a "star" engagement with us at Norfolk for a few nights. This gentleman, of whom I shall have frequent occasion to speak during my dramatic career, was sometimes styled the "American tragedian," probably because he rose to eminence by his acting in America, but he was born in England, and grew up to manhood there. His father was an eminent surgeon, and at one time in the employ of the East India Company, and died in India. Thomas A. Cooper was born in the year 1776; made his first appearance in London when he was about eighteen years of age, in the character of *Malcolm*, in the tragedy of "Macbeth;" "stuck dead" in speaking the closing speech of the part and of the play; and the curtain fell to a shower of hisses, to the great mortification of the *débutant*. In the year 1796 he came to America, and appeared for the first time in the United States in New York, December 9th of the same year, in the character of *Macbeth*, in the play of the same title; his appearance was a success, and from that he rose to be the great tragedian of his day. He was married twice; his first marriage was an unhappy one, his second one the very reverse; his second wife was the daughter of Judge Fairly, of New York city, by whom he had, I think, two daughters. One of them, Miss Priscilla Cooper, was an actress for two or three years, travelled with her father in his "star" engagements, performing *Virginia* to his *Virginius*, *Desdemona* to his *Othello*, *Miss Dorillon*, in "Wives as They Were," and many like charac-

ters, being generally well received, until about the year 1838, when she withdrew from the stage, and married Robert Tyler, Esq., son of John Tyler, afterwards president of the United States. Mr. Thomas Apthorp Cooper left the stage in 1841, and for four or five years held honorable positions as an officer of the United States government. He died in 1846, aged nearly seventy years, in his own house at Bristol, on the Delaware River, not far from Philadelphia, where his last moments were soothed by the loving attentions of his amiable daughter, Mrs. Robert Tyler.

Mr. Booth joined us again at Norfolk, playing a few nights to well-filled houses, and was engaged by Mr. Caldwell to visit New Orleans early in the season there. About the last week of November Mr. Caldwell and his company embarked for New Orleans in the brig Holland, Capt. Lesley. This was a very different voyage from the one we encountered when we went to Virginia. The vessel was larger, had better accommodations, and was better provisioned, our voyage shorter and more pleasant. My summer campaign had been very discouraging and uncomfortable to me. I had been led to suppose my wife would be engaged at Petersburg, but was told at the end of the first week there that the business of the theatre would not permit of the expenses being increased, and that therefore my wife could not be engaged. My own salary, at reduced summer rates, was really not sufficient to pay our expenses for the absolute necessities of life; and when I had paid our necessary bills, my pockets were empty, although I had left off smoking cigars, from necessity, the only habit I had hitherto indulged in which could come under the head of luxuries; so that after my summer's work I found myself one hundred dollars in debt to the manager.

Our season in New Orleans commenced very propitiously, about the middle of December, 1821. We had no "stars" the first week; but Mr. and Mrs. Hughes, being new to the people, were put up as "stars," opening the second night in the tragedy of "*Fazio*," Mr. Hughes as *Fazio* and Mrs. Hughes as *Bianca*. At the commencement of the second week of the season, Mr. Thomas Hilson began a "star" engagement by opening in the character of *Robert Tyke*, in the comedy of the "*School of Reform*," and continued his engagement for three weeks, playing to well-filled houses and giving great satisfaction. Mr. Hilson's *Bob Tyke* has always been considered by me a gem in the way of acting in the serio-comic line. I never had an opportunity of seeing Mr. Emery, the original performer of *Tyke*, but have been told by many

persons that he was very excellent in the character ; yet I have seen Mr. John Bernard as *Tyke*, who, it has been said, was a *fac simile* of Emery in his performance of it ; but although Mr. Bernard's *Tyke* was good, I do not think it was equal to Mr. Hilson's. To be sure, Mr. Hilson had in his favor the advantages of youth and vigor, Mr. Bernard being about sixty years of age when I saw him in this character.

A few days after Mr. Hilson had closed his engagement, as he was about to take his departure on the steamer Robert Fulton, the first steamship that ever ran between New York and New Orleans, as he was ascending the staging which led from the levee to the vessel, one of his feet was caught in an opening of the platform, and he fell and *broke one of his legs*. This mishap detained him for about four weeks longer in the city, confining him to his lodgings.

On the Monday following the close of Mr. Hilson's engagement, Mr. Booth made his first appearance before a New Orleans audience, on the 11th of January, 1822, opening, as was his custom on such occasions, in Shakespeare's "*Richard III.*" There was considerable anxiety in the company, among those most attached to Mr. Booth, in relation to his opening in this character, fearing an unfavorable impression from his manner of performing the first two acts. Knowing, as I did, the people of New Orleans to be impulsive, quick, and positive in their decisions, and not having to appear myself until the fifth act of the play, being on the bills for the *Earl of Richmond*, I went into the front of the theatre when the play began, and took a retired seat in the parquette, as much as possible out of sight of the audience, but so that I could see and watch the effect on them of Mr. Booth's introductory scenes. They gave him a hearty welcome as he made his appearance, of which he took no notice, as usual with him ; but when he made his exit, which he did in *silence*, I observed them stare at each other, as much as to say, "What does all this mean?" After his next scene this "stare" became a frown, and some of the critics began to gesticulate furiously ; and as I was known to two or three of them, and they had observed me in my obscure corner, they came to me for an explanation, and saluting me, said : "Mr. Ludlow, what does all this mean? Who is this man? Does Mr. Caldwell imagine he can palm off upon us this fellow as a great actor?" To which I replied : "Gentlemen, be patient ; when the tragedy is ended, if you do not pronounce him the greatest actor you have *ever seen*, I will give you leave to rail at me as well as him, to your heart's content." "Well," replied one, "if what

you say prove to be the case, I'll give up my judgment on acting hereafter, and forever hold my peace." At the opening of the third act, and after *Richard's* scene with the young princes, as Mr. Booth made his exit, one of the gentlemen near me expressed his disgust by a *hiss*. I immediately begged of him not to condemn a man until he had been fairly tried, and repeated my assurances that he would *applaud* him when the play ended. I had to leave just then, and go behind the scenes to dress for the character of *Richmond*, and of course heard no more; but as the curtain was falling upon the close of the play, I observed the gentleman that hissed standing up in the parquette and applauding with all his might, in which he was joined by the entire audience, and "Bravo! bravo!" rang through the whole house. There never was a more perfect triumph over first prejudices, and Mr. Booth's engagement was a great success.

In the second week of his engagement, there was a deputation of French gentlemen who called on Mr. Caldwell, the manager, to be introduced to Mr. Booth, with the view of ascertaining if he could not perform some tragedy of which they had more knowledge than those he had thus far presented to them; which, up to that time, had been only "*Richard III.*," the "*Iron Chest*," and "*A New Way to Pay Old Debts*,"—six nights in all, our performances being only four times per week. In the two latter plays he had created an immense sensation, and the French population were all agog to witness a performance of the great man in some play they were more familiar with, that they might see him to the best advantage. Mr. Booth told this deputation of gentlemen that he had once performed *Orestes*, in an English translation of Racine's "*Andromache*," and that, with a few days for him to recover the words of this character, it would afford him pleasure to perform it before an audience of French ladies and gentlemen. The party professed themselves under great obligations to him for his courtesy, and a night was set apart for the purpose in the following week. This tragedy, in the English translation, is called "*The Distressed Mother*," was rendered into English by a Mr. Ambrose Phillips, of England, and was often acted during the last half of the previous century, but since has gradually vanished from the stage. Five of the principal characters of the play were cast as follows: *Pyrrhus* (son of *Achilles*), Mr. Hughes; *Orestes* (son of *Agamemnon*), Mr. J. B. Booth; *Pylades* (friend of *Orestes*), Mr. Ludlow; *Andromache* (*Hector's* widow), Mrs. Hughes; *Hermione* (daughter of *Menelaus*), Miss Seymour. When the

night arrived for this tragedy to be performed, the theatre was crowded to an excess, and at least half the audience were French ladies and gentlemen, who understood but very little of the English language, but they could comprehend the tragedy so far as they were familiar with Racine's "Andromache." Mr. Booth received immense applause during the performance of the play, but the closing scene was the crowning of a brilliant triumph. The gentlemen, and even the ladies, rose from their seats and applauded, the former calling out, "Brava! Brava!" "Talma, Talma, Talma!" long after the curtain had descended. And well they might be delighted; for, if the term be admissible, Mr. Booth in this character "exceeded himself." The tragedy was made by this gentleman to finish with the last speech of *Orestes*, who, in a raving fit of madness, as he concluded it, dies on the stage, instead of going off to do it, and have another to come in to tell of it, as in the original, *a la Française*. When the closing words of *Orestes* were spoken, he threw himself into the arms of his friend *Pylades*, and in that position died; and I thought I had never witnessed such a splendid effort of tragic effect, even exceeding Mr. Booth's performance of *Sir Edward Mortimer*, the acting of which so completely absorbed my mind in Petersburg. And this effect was produced in a play that in my opinion would be found to fail entirely in the present day, even with the extraordinary talent of a Booth to sustain the principal character. Although this translation by Mr. Phillips is as good, probably, as could be made of the tragedy, yet the French declamatory style, with the long speeches and limited incident, usual with them, would fail to interest an English or American audience, who, in general, are best pleased with short speeches and rapid action.

There is a story I have twice seen in print, of Mr. Booth having performed two nights in New Orleans in the French language, one of them placing the date in the year 1828. These statements I take to be erroneous, both, and the errors of each I imagine to have arisen out of the facts which have just been related by me, — facts with which I had some personal connection. In a pamphlet on "Dramatic Authors," written by Mr. James Rees, and published in 1845, are the following lines (page 68): "The theatrical season of 1828 in New Orleans introduced J. B. Booth to her citizens; he played three engagements with immense success at the American theatre, and afterwards performed *Orestes* twice at the French theatre to crowded houses."

The *Atlantic Monthly* magazine for August, 1869, has an article on the "Hamlets of the Stage" (page 195), where the following may be found, — speaking of Mr. J. B. Booth: "In New Orleans he once personated *Orestes*, in Racine's play of 'Andromache,' in the original, with a company of French actors. His accent was so pure and his performance so electrical that at the close the theatre rang with cries of 'Talma! Talma!'" I do not know who the writer of the latter article may have been; but I imagine its error to have arisen, probably, from those of the former, contained in Mr. Rees's pamphlet. With any person who may have known Mr. Booth during the first seven years of his career in the United States, viz., from 1821 to 1828, this statement would present a very improbable case. Mr. Booth during that time, whatever he may have been in latter years, was too much alive to his own interest, and too well aware of the position he held on the English stage, to suffer his reputation to be placed in jeopardy by putting himself in a position in which he must unavoidably appear to a disadvantage. However well a man may understand a language foreign to him, and however fluently he may be able to converse in that language among a private circle of friends, he must feel himself embarrassed and unpleasantly situated in addressing in that language a large and critical theatrical audience, whom he is aware will certainly, though perhaps unfairly, judge him by their own dramatic laws, which in this case would be widely different from any that Mr. Booth had been used to, or would recognize in his acting. Mr. Rees's paragraph begins with saying, "The theatrical campaign of 1828 in New Orleans introduced J. B. Booth to her citizens;" from which I infer, he means to say it was his *first* appearance before those citizens, the word "introduced" being generally understood to mean a first presentation. With this understanding of the word, he is most indubitably wrong, that gentleman having made his first appearance in that city in the year 1822, as I have before stated. Therefore I consider the story of Mr. Booth having performed *Orestes* in the *French language*, on the French stage, altogether a mistake arising from his having acted that character in the *French theatre* of New Orleans in 1822, but in the English language.

On the 6th of February, 1822, Mr. Thomas A. Cooper appeared for the *first time* in the city of New Orleans, performing the character of *Richard III.* It was not Mr. Cooper's wish to open with this tragedy; but, having just been per-

formed, it was the only one on Mr. Cooper's list of characters which it was thought could be well done, in the short notice that his arrival afforded to the management. It was by no means one of his happy efforts; I remember his acting of it did not please the public, and for myself, I considered it far inferior to Mr. Booth's or that of Mr. Cooke's representations of the wily *Richard*. His next character was *Othello*, which raised the public estimate of his professional abilities greatly. The following was the cast of the play: *Othello*, Mr. Cooper; *Iago*, Mr. Caldwell; *Cassio*, Mr. Ludlow; *Brabantio*, Mr. Hughes; *Roderigo*, Mr. Russell; *Desdemona*, Miss Seymour; *Emilia*, Mrs. Hughes. This tragedy was well played, and was repeated during his engagement. But the crowning acts of Mr. Cooper's performances were *Virginius* and *Damon*, both of them new in the city of New Orleans and new to the company, and for the latter reason were obliged to be put off awhile, that the performers might have time to study their characters. When about to cast the play of "*Virginius*," the manager was kind enough to give me a choice of the characters of *Icilius* and *Dentatus*. I preferred the latter, for, as I told the manager, "though very fond of ladies, I never liked *playing* the lover;" and *Icilius* was given to a clever young man, who did the part much better than I could have done it. The character of *Virginia* was very well acted by Miss Tilden. This was the *first time* that "*Virginius*" was performed in New Orleans. It was written by James Sheridan Knowles, and first produced at Covent Garden Theatre, May 17, 1820. The character of *Virginius* was originally performed by Mr. W. C. Macready; the character of *Virginia*, daughter of *Virginius*, was sustained by Miss Maria Foote, a very clever actress, afterwards Countess of Harrington. But the whole success of the play depends mainly on the character of *Virginius* being efficiently acted; and that was the secret of its greater success in America, where the principal character found its ablest representatives in Mr. Cooper and Mr. Forrest. I saw Mr. Macready perform *Virginius* in one of his tours through the United States, and at a time when he was in the prime of life, and when he had performed it often enough to have matured any conception of the character which he might have formed. But I did not like his rendition of it; it was too cold and lifeless; it lacked the tender, loving, fatherly beauty of Cooper in scenes with the daughter, and fell far short of the soldierly bearing of the Roman centurion, as performed by Mr. Forrest.

The play of "Damon and Pythias," written by Messrs. Banim and Shiel, of England (it has been said that Mr. Shiel assisted in the writing of this play), was first produced at Covent Garden, on the 28th of May, 1821: *Damon*, Mr. Macready; *Pythias*, Mr. Charles Kemble; *Hermione*, Miss Foote; *Calanthe*, Miss Dance. This latter young lady was a *protégé* of Mrs. Siddons. And yet with all these, and other powerful names, the play was a comparative failure in London. Why was this? These two plays, with their leading characters of *Virginius* and *Damon*, acted by Mr. Cooper or Mr. Forrest, have been the most successful ones of their class on the American stage. The following is the cast of the four principal characters in New Orleans at this engagement of Mr. Cooper: *Damon*, Mr. Cooper; *Pythias*, Mr. Ludlow; *Hermione*, Mrs. Hughes; *Calanthe*, Miss Jane Placide. These last-mentioned plays were repeated during this engagement. Mr. Cooper selected for his benefit Beaumont and Fletcher's comedy of "Rule a Wife, and have a Wife," with the following cast of the principal characters: *Don Leon*, Mr. Cooper; *Duke of Medina*, Mr. Hughes; *Michael Perez* ("the copper captain"), Mr. Ludlow; *Cacafoga*, Mr. J. Gray; *Margaretta*, Miss Seymour; *Estifania*, Miss Jane Placide. The comedy was performed to great applause. The public were quite surprised to find Mr. Cooper had so much comic humor. This comedy was repeated after the departure of Mr. Cooper, with Mr. Caldwell as *Don Leon*, but the audience did not like Mr. Caldwell's *Leon* as much as they did Mr. Cooper's; yet I thought that in his assumption of the affected simplicity of the awkward recruit, and the apparent humility of the subdued husband, Mr. Caldwell was the most natural of the two. But in the closing scenes, when *Leon* returns to his real character of the high-minded, chivalrous man, determined to be master of his own house, Mr. Cooper was far ahead of the other gentleman, his manner and appearance being surprisingly dignified and commanding. Mr. Cooper's style of acting was founded on the John Kemble school, a little modified, perhaps; rather more impulsive in passionate scenes, but possessing all the towering grandeur of that great English tragedian. It was as unlike that of Mr. J. B. Booth or Mr. Edmund Kean as a *monsoon* is to a *whirlwind*. The impassioned scenes of Mr. Cooper came upon you, "as we often see, against a storm, a silence in the heavens, the rack stands still, the bold wind speechless, and the orb below as hushed as death; anon the dreadful thunder doth rend the region."

You beheld the silent and gradual approaches of the storm of passion, and you stood transfixed with the grandeur of the scene.

Some time in the month of March of this year Miss Rosina Seymour became Mrs. James S. Rowe. Mr. Rowe was at that time treasurer of the theatre for Mr. James H. Caldwell. He and Miss Seymour, being passengers together from Virginia to New Orleans, had contracted a liking for each other, which in three months grew into love, and ended, as all such affairs usually do, in marriage. But in theirs, as in most similar cases, "the course of true love" did not "run smooth." Mrs. Bloxton, a member of the company of Mr. Caldwell, whose first-marriage name was Seymour, had taken this young lady when an orphan of very tender years, and raised her as her own child, and now wished to have the proceeds of the young lady's talents to fill her own purse. This would have been gratefully and cheerfully continued to her by the young lady, but that Mrs. Seymour had become Mrs. Bloxton, by marrying a young man of about half of her own number of years; and this young man had within a short time after his marriage shown, by actions not easily misunderstood, that he was more fond of *young* ladies than *old* ones. Now, of this not unnatural preference the wife was most profoundly ignorant. Not so Miss Rosina Seymour; in short, the latter was not only aware of it, but viewed the matter with utmost disgust. So she consulted with some of her friends, and concluded to place herself in a position where she would not have her own feelings wounded, and might perhaps save those of one who had done all a mother could have done for her, and where she would be no less her child by becoming herself a wife. So one day Mrs. Ludlow and I were called upon by Mr. Rowe to aid and assist him in carrying out a plan to make Miss Seymour Mrs. Rowe, and this was his plan: I was to engage Mr. Bloxton in sundry games of billiards at a house adjoining the theatre, on a certain day, commencing about ten o'clock, A. M., the usual rehearsal hour, and while Mrs. Bloxton was engaged in rehearsal, in which Miss Seymour, Mrs. Ludlow, and I had no parts. Mr. Rowe was to call for Mrs. Ludlow in a carriage, proceed to the lodgings of Mr. and Mrs. Bloxton, take Miss Seymour into the carriage, and the three proceed to the house of a certain clergyman, and there the deed was to be done that passed Miss Rosina Seymour over to the legal authority of Mr. James S. Rowe. The act passed off beautifully, and the performance did not occupy an hour.

One day of *reproaches*, and another of *tears*, brought mother and daughter together again ; and the old lady found it was too true, what the poet Moore has written : —

“When once the young heart of a maiden is stolen,
The maiden herself will steal after it soon.”

And as for the secret lover, he was “sad by fits, by starts was wild ;” and not long after, his grief, “in notes by *distance* made more sweet, in gentle murmurs *died away*.”

CHAPTER XXIII.

Author takes a Benefit—Sings a New Song—Which becomes popular—"Hunters of Kentucky"—The Foundation of the American Theatre in New Orleans—Author and Wife go to Nashville for the Summer—They ascend the Cumberland River—A Strange Trip—Author engages with his old Manager, Mr. Drake—Sings the "Hunters of Kentucky" nearly every Night through Season—Company go to Huntsville—Thence to Fayetteville—Mr. Thomas Fletcher induces Company to play at Fayetteville—Performance in a Ball-room—Acting under Difficulties—A Funny Tragedy and a Serious Farce—Author returns to New Orleans—Palmer Fisher and Wife—Mrs. Thayer—Season in the French Theatre—Part of the Company go to Natchez with Ludlow—Mr. Cooper, first Star here—Mr. Dwyer—Master Smith—Mr. Pelby—Mr. Caldwell and his Camp Street Theatre—Season closes in Nashville—Ludlow and Company return to New Orleans—Camp Street Theatre lighted with Gas—Introduction of Gas into City of New Orleans—"Hunters of Kentucky" again—A Piece of Gas-pipe thrown at the Author—The Matter explained Years after—Edwin Forrest makes his First Appearance in New Orleans—Tragedy of "Wallace"—A Great Triumph.

THE "benefits" of this season commenced sometime early in May, my own being about the fourth or fifth one. I do not remember the pieces acted on that occasion, but I do recollect that I did on that night something entirely out of my line of business, which created quite a sensation, and was the source of considerable annoyance to me for more than a year afterwards. It was this: A brother of mine, in the city of New York, had cut out of the New York *Mirror*, a periodical of that city, some lines that "tickled his fancy," called "The Hunters of Kentucky, or the Battle of New Orleans," written by Samuel Woodward, of New York, author of that well-known piece of poetry, entitled the "Old Oaken Bucket." Those lines above referred to my brother sent to me in a letter, which I received about a month prior to my benefit. The lines pleased me, and I thought would please the people of New Orleans; so I determined to sing them on the occasion of my benefit. The tune, to which they seemed adapted, was taken from the comic opera of "Love Laughs at Locksmiths," being Risk's song of *Miss Baily*. When the night came I found the pit, or parquette, of the theatre crowded full of "river men,"—that is, keel-boat and flat-boat men. There were very few steamboat men. These men were easily known by their linsey-woolsey clothing and blanket coats. As soon as the comedy of the night was over, I dressed myself in a

buckskin hunting-shirt and leggins, which I had borrowed of a river man, and with *moccasins* on my feet, and an old slouched hat on my head, and a rifle on my shoulder, I presented myself before the audience. I was saluted with loud applause of hands and feet, and a prolonged whoop, or howl, such as Indians give when they are especially pleased. I sang the first verse, and these extraordinary manifestations of delight were louder and longer than before; but when I came to the following lines:—

“But Jackson he was wide awake, and wasn’t scared with trifles,
For well he knew what aim we take with our Kentucky rifles;
So he marched us down to ‘Cyprus Swamp;’ the ground was low and mucky;
There stood ‘John Bull,’ in martial pomp, *but here was old Kentucky.*”

As I delivered the last five words, I took my old hat off my head, threw it upon the ground, and brought my rifle to the position of taking aim. At that instant came a shout and an Indian yell from the inmates of the pit, and a tremendous applause from other portions of the house, the whole lasting for nearly a minute, and, as Edmund Kean told his wife, after his first great success in London, “the house rose to me!” The whole pit was standing up and shouting. I had to sing the song three times that night before they would let me off.

On the 29th of May, 1822, Mr. James H. Caldwell laid, with his own hands, the corner-stone of the *first American theatre* built in New Orleans, being at the same time projector and proprietor of it. This building was known ever after as the Camp Street Theatre. Into this edifice Mr. Caldwell put the earnings of his two previous seasons in New Orleans, and borrowed the remaining amount necessary to complete the work from gentlemen of the city, in sums of \$300; in consideration for which loan every subscriber of \$300 was entitled to a ticket for each and every season of his management in that city, until the principal was paid back, the borrower having the privilege of cancelling such claim at any time within ten years. The foundation of this proposed building, to the extent of ten or fifteen feet, was all that was put up during the summer; the work was then stopped, but renewed again in the fall.

Mr. Caldwell’s company returned to Virginia for the summer, but I and my wife did not go with them. As I have before stated, I had received an invitation from my old friend Samuel Drake, Sr., to join him at Nashville, Tennessee, where he had rented the theatre for the summer. Late in the month of May I embarked with my wife and two children on the steamboat General Robinson, commanded, if I remember

right, by a Captain Smith. We had a very pleasant trip up as far as the mouth of the Cumberland River. There it was ascertained that the Robinson could not, with her freight, pass over the Harpeth Shoals, between Smithland and Nashville; consequently she would proceed no further, but put out her freight and passengers, to go forward on smaller boats. The only one on which it was supposed we could reach Nashville was called the Leopard. She was the most miserable apology for a steamboat that could have been started anywhere, even in those primitive days of steamboating. The main shaft of this boat was made of *wood*, with four or five buckets on each end about the dimensions of a laundress's washboard; and her *power*, I imagine, must have been *one mule* and a *jackass*; at all events it was not sufficient to stem the current of the the Cumberland at certain points of the river. I remember that just about ten o'clock at night of our second day on board of this craft, I observed a wild and romantic spot where the boat had stopped to wood. There was no habitation in sight, but nevertheless the captain stopped; and if no owner of the wood appeared to claim pay for it, he *of course* would stop and pay for it as he returned down the river. The capacity of the boat would not allow of much wood being taken on at one time; still, as it was a steep bank, and only three or four hands to do the work, it took a considerable length of time to get a few cords on board, and before they had finished I had gone to my bed and was sound asleep. During the night I awoke, and found the boat was running, as I heard the paddles splashing in the water; so I thought "it's all right, we're going ahead," and so went to sleep again. About sunrise I got up and went out on deck. The boat was lying alongside of a high bank, and they were wooding again. I saw the captain standing on the top of the bank, and I went to him to inquire how many miles we had progressed during the night. As I mounted the bank and looked around, I thought I recognized the romantic spot of the evening before; so I said: "Captain, this is remarkable; I never saw two places so much alike as this spot and the place at which you wooded last night." He laughed, and said: "Well, they are somewhat alike; but you will understand the matter better when I tell you *it is the same place!*" "How! the same place? Why, I heard the boat puffing and paddling up-stream during the night." "Very true," said he, "and we had got very near to the head of the Shoals when the *wood gave out*, the steam *got low*, and we drifted down; and so I had to drop back to this point to wood again."

In about an hour we got under headway again, started up with all the steam we could carry, got about half-way over the Shoals, and behold, the wood was exhausted again, the paddles moved slower, and at last the boat began to drop down stream. They got her to the shore as quick as possible, tied up, and finally concluded to hunt up some person and endeavor to procure horses and attach them to the boat, and then, by means of steam and horse-power, try it again. In the course of about three hours the captain had procured *two yoke of oxen*. These were harnessed to the boat, and what with *steam-power* and *bull-power*, we finally succeeded in overcoming the difficulty.

But to return to my narrative. After several days of exertion, we reached Nashville. There I found Mr. Drake and company, who had begun their season in the Cherry Street Theatre (barn, according to Mr. Rees), the one first occupied by Messrs. Collins & Jones. I and my wife being engaged for the summer season, we opened in the comedy of the "Soldier's Daughter," with the farce of "Three Weeks After Marriage." In the first I performed *Frank Heartall*, my wife the character of *Mrs. Malfort*. In the farce I performed *Sir Charles Racket*, my wife not being in the piece; *Governor Heartall*, in the comedy, Mr. Drake, Sr.; *Widow Cheerly*, Miss Julia Drake. These two latter characters were well acted. This lady also performed *Lady Racket*, in the farce.

Miss Julia Drake, afterwards the mother of Julia Dean, was then in the heyday of her beauty and talent, full of life and animation, and as fine a representative of those two characters as any I have ever seen in my experience of the stage in fifty years. Those persons who may remember Julia Dean in comedy (there are very few now alive who have seen Julia Drake) can form some idea of how the latter performed those characters when I say she had all the talent her daughter afterwards displayed, with the same silver-toned, clear voice, the same joyous laugh, added to a much more beautiful and symmetrical face, with dark, expressive eyes, beaming with mirth and merriment. I have frequently, while witnessing the performances of Julia Dean, turned my face from the stage, and could then imagine that Julia Drake was acting, so like were their voices; but turning to the stage again, the illusion was destroyed in part, for the exquisitely moulded Grecian face was not there. Julia Drake appeared at the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, in the fall of 1821, in the character of *Juliana*, in the "Honeymoon," with great success; played a

short engagement, and returned again to the West, where her services were important in her father's theatres.

Of Mr. Drake's company at Nashville during the summer of 1822 I can recollect only a few of the names: Samuel Drake, Sr., Samuel Drake, Jr., Alexander Drake, Palmer Fisher, N. M. Ludlow, Miss Julia Drake, Mrs. Palmer Fisher, Mrs. Ludlow, and Mrs. Mongin. During the season I was, I may say, *compelled* to sing the "Hunters of Kentucky" almost every night of performance; fortunately for me, however, there were but four in each week. Some persons of Nashville had heard me sing the song in New Orleans, and made so many requests of Mr. Drake, and were so persistent, that he begged of me to sing it, that he might be released from further importunities. My compliance was a source of great inconvenience to me; for, no matter how much fatigued by previous exertions of the evening, I had to sing the "Hunters of Kentucky" before the audience would leave the theatre, and sometimes twice or thrice. I have always found Nashville the hottest city in summer that I ever was in, without any exception. The heat becoming very oppressive, Mr. Drake determined on closing the theatre for a short time, and to take the company to Huntsville, Alabama, distant something less than a hundred miles. In a few days after the closing of the theatre we started by the usual conveyances of those days, wagons. We were two or three days making the trip, and commenced our season shortly after our arrival, performing in a temporary theatre that had been built by some amateur performers. The building stood in the suburbs of the town, on a road leading towards what was known then as "Ditto's Landing," on the Tennessee River. It was a framed and boarded building, of very limited capacity and plainest appearance; but it answered the purpose for a summer theatre with a community not over-fastidious. I think we performed there four or five weeks, to tolerable houses, in a town containing less than two thousand inhabitants. To this town my unfortunate reputation in the "Hunters of Kentucky" still pursued me. I was nightly bored with it, and I fancied at times some of the audience likewise, until I got heartily tired of it; so determined on making an effort to get rid of the nuisance. With this view before me, I gave a copy of the song to one of the newspapers of the town for publication, thinking that when those who liked it could sing it for themselves and their friends they would spare me any further affliction. But in this I was mistaken; they still insisted on having it, and I was compelled to sing it almost every night.

I believe the manager made his expenses while in Huntsville, and those of the trip to and from the town.

On our way back to Nashville we passed through a village called Fayetteville, some twenty or thirty miles from Huntsville. There I met with a gentleman I had known in Nashville during my first visit to that city, a Mr. Thomas H. Fletcher, then a lawyer residing in Fayetteville. He was very fond of the Drama, and extremely anxious that we should stop and give them a 'few nights' entertainment. It was in vain that we assured him that we were not at all prepared to do any thing professionally there, having neither scenery, wardrobe, nor books with us, and but a few members of the company present in our party. The main portion of our baggage and a number of the young men of the company had started from Huntsville the day before we did, and were ahead of us on their way to Nashville. But Mr. Fletcher was very persistent in his efforts, and brought some of his friends to back him, saying he had some plays among his books, and was sure we might find something that we could perform. The landlord of the hotel was brought in to bear upon us, proffering the use of his "large room" free of charge. Finding it impossible to get off without appearing very ill-natured, we finally consented to give one night. Alex. Drake informed us that in one of the wagons then with us there were some small pieces of "set scenery" and a "waterfall" scene, which he had collected together after the first wagon had started, and one trunk containing some odds and ends of dresses picked up in the wardrobe-room at a final clearing out of it. We concluded to play the tragedy of "Douglas, or the Noble Shepherd," and the farce of the "Village Lawyer." Mr. Fletcher furnished us a book of the tragedy, and I had one of the farce. "Douglas" was cast as follows: *Glenalvon*, Mr. Fisher; *Young Norval*, Ludlow; *Lord Randolph*, S. Drake; *Old Norval*, A. Drake; *Stranger* ("the trembling coward"), Mr. Somebody, name not recollected; *Messengers*, all by one of the little Fishers, named Oceana; *Lady Randolph*, Mrs. Ludlow; *Anna*, Mrs. Mongin. The farce was cast as follows: *Scout* (the lawyer), Mr. Fisher; *Old Snarl*, Ludlow; *Sheep-face*, A. Drake; *Mittimus*, S. Drake; *Mrs. Scout*, Mrs. Fisher; *Nancy* (*Snarl's* daughter), Mrs. Mongin. We had but *two scenes*,—one, the "waterfall," that answered for all out-door scenes; the other, all in-door scenes, was simply the rolling up of the "waterfall" and discovering the end of the ball-room within which we were acting. The wings, or side-scenes, were bits of every thing. The dresses were as much

out of keeping as the scenery. Mr. Fisher's dress for *Glenalvon* was a plaid cloak belonging to his wife, worn as a kind of kilt, with a leather strap around the waist. And for *Young Norval* I wore an old man's silk coat, of green and white stripe, the skirts turned up in order to make a jacket of it, and a plaid shawl belonging to my wife forming the skirt or kilt; a large collar of the coat was turned underneath, in order to get it out of sight; the first made me appear *corpulent*, and the last raised a *hump* on my back larger than that usually contrived by the would-be Forrests for *Richard III.* I did not know what a "figure of fun" I had made of myself until Mrs. Fisher shocked my sensibilities by pointing at me and breaking out into a loud laugh, and remarking at the same time that I only lacked a *red nose* to make me, personally, a good "Punch" in an Italian *Fantoccini* of "Punch and Judy." However, it was too late then to make a change; it was time for the curtain to rise. And this curtain was formed by joining two blue and white bed-spreads belonging to the landlord. The stage and audience portion of the room was lighted up with *tallow candles*. The audience were seated on chairs, without any elevation. The room was full, and some of the male portion of the audience stood in a hall leading to the large room, where they looked in as well as they could. The audience seemed delighted, and when the curtain went down for the last act, we could hear many remarks of commendation, as they slowly passed out of the room. After divesting ourselves of our stage dresses, Mr. Fisher and I descended to the public room, and found Mr. Fletcher with two other gentleman waiting to see us, in order to obtain a promise from us to give them another night's entertainment. We were quite at a loss to know how to answer them. First, for the reason that we were not sure there was any thing we could give them with our limited resources; and, secondly, we had some compunctious visitings of conscience in charging a dollar admission and giving them dramatic entertainments with such an evident lack of the necessary adjuncts of scenery and dresses. But we found that the poor, dear souls were quite unconscious of the swindle we had perpetrated upon their pockets, and that they wished us to repeat the offence. It was decided we should call the next morning on Mr. Fletcher at his office, and look among his collection of plays for something out of which we might contrive another entertainment. This we did the next day, and settled upon the petite comedy of the "Liar" and a domestic

drama called the "Adopted Child," both of which were very well done, as far as the *acting* was concerned; Mr. Fisher performing *Michael*, and his little girl, Oceana, the boy's part. The following day we took a final leave of the good people of Fayetteville, both parties well pleased each with the other.

Mr. Drake's fall season in Nashville, of 1822, was not very remunerative to him, and afforded to his company barely *living* salaries. He closed it about the 1st of November, and returned with his company to Kentucky; my wife and I remaining, to return to New Orleans to rejoin Mr. Caldwell, with whom I had made an engagement prior to our leaving that city.

As I have spoken of Mr. and Mrs. Palmer Fisher several times, and as they were members of the theatrical profession for a large portion of their lives, I trust it will not be considered out of order for me to make some further mention of them, particularly as they were among the early pioneers of the Drama of the West. Mr. Palmer Fisher was born in England, about the year 1780; and if not born in a theatre, was reared in one from his infancy. He came first to America in 1812, and was a member of a "commonwealth" company of theatricals at that time under the direction of Twaits, Gilfert, and Holland. He returned shortly after to England, married, and returned to America with his wife in 1819. At that time he joined the company of his brother-in-law, Samuel Drake, Sr., who then had a circuit of theatres, comprising Louisville, Frankfort, and Lexington. Mrs. Fisher, who was almost a novice then, made her *debut* on American boards the latter part of 1819, at Lexington, as *Jesse Oatland*, in "Cure for the Heartache." They visited St. Louis, Missouri, early in 1820, with Mr. Drake and company, where I first met them, as I have previously stated. I met them again in Nashville in 1822. They then had two fine little girls, Oceana and Alexina, about four and two years of age. The latter they called by the pet name of "Cork," that being the first word she could distinctly utter. When "Cork" grew to womanhood, she was well and popularly known as Miss Alexina Fisher, becoming a great favorite in the Eastern theatres. Mrs. Palmer Fisher was born in 1800, at Tynemouth, England. Her husband, Mr. Fisher, died in Boston in 1827; in 1830 Mrs. Fisher married Mr. Edward Thayer, an actor and a gentleman, who died in 1872. Shortly after Mr. Thayer's death, her health being impaired, she withdrew from the stage, and early in the summer of 1873 she went to Atlantic City, New Jersey, for her

health, but died there July 22, 1873, nearly seventy-three years of age. A woman of irreproachable character, and highly esteemed by all who knew her.

After the departure of the company for Kentucky, my wife and I made a short visit to her parents, who resided about twenty miles from Nashville, where we remained a week, and then started for New Orleans by way of the Cumberland, Ohio, and Mississippi Rivers, on a steamer. Our trip was not a pleasant one, for the boat was small, and we were uncomfortably crowded. Mr. Caldwell began this season the latter part of November, 1822, in the French theatre on Orleans Street, the following persons constituting his company: James H. Caldwell, manager and actor; Richard Russell, Sr., stage-manager and actor; Messrs. Hughes, N. M. Ludlow, Jackson Gray, Joseph Hutton, W. H. Benton, Garner T. Brennan, J. M. Scott, John Higgins, James Scholes, William McCafferty, William Forrest, Edward Caldwell, and others. Mesdames Hughes, R. Russell, Rosina Rowe, Ludlow, Baker, Gray, Hutton, Higgins, Mongin, Noke; Misses Jane Placide and Eliza Placide. Mrs. Alexander Drake joined the company after the season had commenced a short time. I do not remember any thing especially interesting during this season. Mr. Thomas A. Cooper, and Mr. John Dwyer each played an engagement at New Orleans. In the spring of this season, 1822-3, a portion of the company was transferred to Natchez, in order to give an opportunity for certain "stars" to appear there, and I was dispatched to play seconds to Mr. Cooper. The direction of this wing of the company was given to Mr. W. H. Benton. There was no theatre then in Natchez, the temporary one in which I performed in 1817 having been destroyed by fire in September, 1822, about six months previous to this visit of Mr. Caldwell's company. Mr. Caldwell, however, had rented a large room in Parker's Hotel, and put a small stock of scenery into it. He also had the audience portion fitted up with benches erected on an inclined plane, and so arranged as to seat about three hundred persons, from which *two dollars* was required for each admission during the nights of Mr. Cooper's performances; after his engagement the price was reduced to *one dollar* each person. Mr. Cooper's engagement was for *eight* nights, the receipts amounting to an average of nearly \$350 for each night. We opened in Natchez early in April, 1823, with the play of "Damon and Pythias:" *Damon*, Mr. Cooper; *Pythias*, Ludlow; *Dionysius*, Benton; *Calanthe*, Mrs. A. Drake; *Hermione*, Miss Jane Placide; others not remembered. The play

was received with decided approbation. Mr. Cooper performed during this engagement *Damon*, twice; *Virginius*, twice; *Othello*, once; *Beverly*, the gamester, once; *Shylock*, Merchant of Venice, once; *Leon*, in "Rule a Wife and have a Wife," once; and *Petruchio*, in "Catharine and Petruchio." Natchez being a very small city, such receipts showed the engagement certainly was a great success. Mr. Dwyer followed Mr. Cooper in an engagement for six nights, during which he performed *Gossamer*, in "Laugh when You Can;" *Belcour*, in "The West Indian;" *Vapid*, in the "Dramatist;" *Rover*, in "Wild Oats;" *Tangent*, in "The Way to Get Married;" *Charles Surface*, in "School for Scandal," and *Young Wilding*, in the "Liar." But alas! he was not the "handsome Jack Dwyer" whom I, as a boy at fifteen years of age, saw make his first appearance in America, at the Park Theatre, New York city, in the character of *Belcour*, during March, 1810. I was told he had not been acting for some time previous to this, his present visit to the South, but had been filling the position of a teacher of elocution in a seminary of learning at a town in Canada. He had become obese, and no longer fit to represent the *Gossamers*, *Vapids*, and *Belcours*, in which he was at one time unequalled in the United States. The people of the South had of late years been witnessing the performances of Mr. Caldwell and others in the same line of characters played by Mr. Dwyer, men better adapted in regard to age and general appearance; consequently Mr. Dwyer's engagement was a failure. Our next "star" was a supposed youthful prodigy named Smith (no relation of Sol. Smith), a clever lad, but not indicating any extraordinary genius or talent for the histrionic art. Immediately after this youth came Mr. Pelby, a rather clever tragedian; he was a Boston actor, and had formerly worked at his trade of saddle-making. His ambition led him to strive for the most honorable niche in the temple of Melpomene; but, having an inexpressive face and a husky voice, he never reached the desired eminence. He has been dead many years.

During my sojourn in Natchez I made the acquaintance of Mr. William L. Harding, a gentleman who resided near the town of Franklin, Attakapas, Louisiana. He was a bachelor, and a man of wealth, who seemed to be of a quiet, domestic turn of mind, resolving to take the world easy and enjoy life as it progressed. He became, apparently, very much attached to my little son, a lovely boy, then about four years of age. Making all allowance for a parent's partiality, I think, from his appearance at that age, there were reasons for believing he

would grow up a perfect model of manly beauty. Mr. Harding offered all kinds of inducements to get my wife and me to agree to his adopting him; and for himself he said: "I shall never marry; the boy shall have all my property. I shall educate and rear him as a gentleman, and with your permission, will, by act of Legislature, add the name of 'Harding' to his present one; in short, he shall be known as my son by adoption, and have a legal claim to my property, either by or without a 'will' from under my hand." But all these offers, although great inducements, could not prevail on us to give our consent, or even to entertain the thought for a moment. At last, however, we did agree that he might take the boy for the *summer*, as we would be travelling most of that time, and as we had discovered that the child had become very fond of his admirer, and seemed anxious to go with him. So when we left Natchez, Mr. Harding took charge of my boy, with a promise to bring him to us at New Orleans, or wherever we might be the following winter. When the winter came and we were at New Orleans, we wrote for the child to be brought to us. Mr. Harding came to New Orleans, but without the boy, saying he had come to beg us to allow him to keep the child till the following winter; that he should be lonely and miserable without him; and that the boy was enjoying himself much better where he was than he could with us, busy as we were; and unable to afford the attentions and pleasures which he obtained where he then was. Finally we consented he should remain with this gentleman, in compliance with requests made by him, until the fall of 1826, and then—but I will not anticipate events.

This season at Natchez concluded about the 1st of July, when the New Orleans and Natchez companies were reorganized, and one company formed, that proceeded to Nashville under Mr. Richard Russell, Sr., as manager *pro tem*. Mr. W. H. Benton left the company at the end of this season, to undertake the editorship of a newspaper at Natchez or Port Gibson, I do not remember which.

Before taking a final leave of the New Orleans season of 1822-3, I wish to state that Mr. Caldwell, having commenced building a theatre in that city in May, 1822, had in May, 1823, got it to a condition—though not completed—that permitted him to perform in it *one night*, which was the 14th of May, 1823, the entertainments being the comedy of the "Dramatist," and the comic opera of the "Romp." This building was known as the "Camp Street Theatre," and stood on the west side of Camp, a few yards below Poydras Street.

The interior of this building was destroyed by fire many years ago, but the walls were left standing, and it was reconstructed inside and occupied as a large auction mart, and such it has continued up to the date of this writing.

When Mr. Caldwell commenced building the Camp Street Theatre, its location was considered by many of his friends to be a very injudicious one. They said "it was too much out of the way;" "surely ladies would never go there;" they thought "people would never go above Canal Street to visit a theatre." Canal Street was then considered the upper boundary of the city proper; beyond that was only known as the "Faubourg Saint Marie." But Mr. Caldwell had more acumen, and a better comprehension of his business than many of his would-be advisers. He knew—and he was right—that where there is a desire in a community for theatrical amusements, and wealth to minister to it, people will always find the ways and means of gratifying that desire, even at the cost of some personal inconvenience. Mr. Caldwell knew that the history of theatres showed that they have always proved to be a nucleus for various other kinds of business; that they invariably draw a population around them, and the Camp Street Theatre would probably be no exception to such general results. During the first two seasons of this theatre, the streets leading to it above Canal Street were without pavement for carriages or footmen. Those who had not the means for riding had to walk on Camp Street from Canal, on pieces of timber laid together, forming a pathway about two and a half feet in width, made of boat gunwales purchased from Western traders who had brought their stock to New Orleans on "flat-boats," and having no further use for the boats, sold them on very cheap terms.

Mr. Caldwell's company opened at Nashville in the "barn," as Mr. Rees seems pleased to call it, the latter part of July, 1823, with the comedy of the "Soldier's Daughter:" *Governor Heartall*, Mr. J. Gray; *Frank Heartall*, N. M. Ludlow; *Timothy Quaint*, R. Russell, Sr.; *Widow Cheerly*, Mrs. R. Russell. Mr. Caldwell had gone to Virginia to visit his family, and to bring them with him on his return to New Orleans for the ensuing winter.

The Nashville season was simply a paying one, and nothing transpired during the time worth recording here. It closed about the third week of November, the company returning to New Orleans, where they commenced the season about the 1st of December, in the French theatre, Orleans Street, and where they continued to perform until the last of that month,

when Mr. Caldwell's lease terminated. He then removed permanently to the Camp Street Theatre. On the *1st of January, 1824*, the Camp Street Theatre opened. Mr. Caldwell spoke an "opening address," written by Thomas Wells, Esq., of Boston, Massachusetts, after which was performed Morton's comedy called "Town and Country," followed by the comic opera entitled "Of Age To-morrow." Although not in my line of business, at the request of the manager I undertook the character of *Kit Cosey*, in the comedy. I give a cast of the characters of the comedy, and a list of Mr. Caldwell's assistants in the different accessory departments of the theatre; and take occasion to remark that, of the *twenty-three* persons named, there is only *one living* at the time of this writing, namely, N. M. Ludlow, the writer of this book:—

TOWN AND COUNTRY.

Manager and proprietor, Mr. James H. Caldwell.

Stage-manager, Mr. Richard Russell; treasurer, Mr. James S. Rowe.

Orchestra leader, Mr. William Noke; machinist, Mr. John Varden.

Scenic artist, Mr. Antonio Mondelli; gas engineer, S. Simonds.

CHARACTERS OF THE COMEDY.

Reuben Glenroy, Mr. J. H. Caldwell; *Rev. Owen Glenroy*, Mr. Ed. Caldwell; *Captain Glenroy*, Mr. William Forrest; *Charles Plastic*, Mr. Garner; *Kit Cosey*, Mr. N. M. Ludlow; *Trot*, Mr. J. Gray; *Jacky Hawbuck*, Mr. R. Russell; *Ross*, Mr. J. M. Scott; *Williams*, Mr. J. Higgins; *Evans*, Mr. William McCafferty; *Waiter*, Mr. James Scholes; *Hon. Mrs. Glenroy*, Mrs. R. Russell; *Rosalie Somers*, Miss Jane Placide; *Mrs. Trot*, Mrs. Ludlow; *Mrs. Moreen*, Mrs. J. Higgins; *Goody Hawbuck*, Mrs. Mongin; *Taffline*, Mrs. W. Noke.

An era of importance in the history of New Orleans was the opening of this theatre, *lighted with gas*. This was the first building lighted by such means in the city of New Orleans. It was an individual enterprise of Mr. James H. Caldwell, who had "gas-works," on a limited scale, erected on the same lot on which his theatre stood. His next act of importance was lighting one side of Camp, from Canal Street to the theatre. It was two years, I believe, before Mr. Caldwell could induce the city authorities to allow him to light a portion of Canal Street; finally, with great exertions for a number of

years, he succeeded in forming a "gas company," for the purpose of lighting New Orleans. Of this company Mr. Caldwell was president for a long succession of years.

A few nights after his first performance in the Camp Street Theatre, an incident occurred that came near being an unpleasant one for me. The "Hunters of Kentucky" still pursued me like some evil genius. The manager requested me to sing that song, now become so popular that you could hear it sung or whistled almost any day as you passed along the principal thoroughfares of the city. The night on which I sang it, as just referred to, the theatre was crowded with people; and at the conclusion of the verse ending with the words, "There stood John Bull, in martial pomp, but here was old Kentucky," when I threw my hat off and raised my rifle, something passed swiftly by my head, within a few inches of it, and fell upon the stage a little way behind me. On the instant there was an evident commotion among the audience, a general running to and fro, with a rush for the upper tiers of the theatre, and a cry of "Turn him out," and "Pitch him over." I ceased singing, for I knew I could not be heard, so picking up the missile, and taking it to the front lights, found it was a piece of iron gas-pipe, about eighteen inches long and the thickness of a man's finger. I held it up before the audience without speaking, bowed, and retired from the stage. It was ten or fifteen minutes before order was restored among our auditors. Several of my friends and two of the police guards came to the stage-door to inquire if I knew who the offender was. I told them I had not the remotest idea who; and the conclusion generally, I believe, was that the disturber was most likely some Englishman, in whose bosom the "British lion" had been suddenly aroused by the words of the song. It was not until about eighteen years after the event that the real offender became known to me, and it was in this wise: About the time mentioned, passing up the Mississippi River by steamboat, I was sitting late at night conversing with some of the officers of the boat, and listening to their jokes and witticisms, when a man, who had been sitting there silent for some time, said to me: "Mr. Ludlow, did you ever discover who it was that threw a piece of gas-pipe at you when you were singing the 'Hunters of Kentucky,' many years ago?" To which I replied, I never had. He lowered his eyes for a few seconds, then looking at me, in a jocular manner said: "Well, sir, it was me." I gave his own words. "You?" I said, somewhat astonished. "Yes, sir, me!" "Well," I said, "why did you do it? How had I offended you?"

“Offended !” he exclaimed ; “ so far was I from being offended that I believe I would have knocked any man down who would have dared to hiss you.” “ But why did you throw at my head, what, had it hit me, would most likely have hurt me very seriously ? ” Said he : “ Mr. Ludlow, I have mentioned this matter for the purpose of apologizing to you for what was done under great excitement. I hope you will pardon me for an act that has hurt me more since than it was possible for you to have been, had the pipe hit you. These are the facts, sir : I am a Kentuckian ; I was at the battle of New Orleans, under the command of Gen. Jackson ; I went to the theatre for the purpose of hearing that song sung by you, of which I had heard many persons speak. I accidentally picked up a piece of gas-pipe in the lobby of the second tier, and was carelessly tossing it to and fro in my hands when you commenced the song, and when you spoke of Cypress Swamp and the old general, *I let her went* ; and if it had been a gold repeater watch, it would have gone in the same way.” This man was the principal engineer of the boat on which I was then travelling. We had a drink together that night, and were good friends ever after. He is dead now, poor fellow !

During the early part of February, 1824, Edwin Forrest, then a youth of not quite eighteen years of age, made his *first appearance* in the city of New Orleans, and opened in the character of *Jaffier*, in the tragedy of “ Venice Preserved.” Mr. Sol Smith says, in his “ Theatrical Management,” page 49, that Mr. Forrest’s opening in *Jaffier* was in 1825-6 ; and Mr. Rees, in his “ Dramatic Authors,” page 62, places Mr. Forrest among the “ stars ” of the season, 1824. They are *both wrong*. As I was a member of Mr. Caldwell’s company, and performed in “ Venice Preserved ” with Mr. Forrest, on the night of his first appearance in New Orleans, I presume I may be allowed to know something of the circumstances. The facts are, that Mr. Edwin Forrest was engaged by Mr. Caldwell as a *regular member* of his company for the season of 1824, and was accorded the privilege of an *opening* character, and he selected *Jaffier*. Afterwards Mr. Forrest played whatever the manager chose to cast him for ; which, generally speaking, were the juvenile heroes in tragedy and the best of what are professionally called “ walking gentlemen.” I remember his performing *Frank Rochdale*, in the comedy of “ John Bull,” to J. H. Caldwell’s *Peregrine*, and N. M. Ludlow’s *Tom Shuffleton*. With the public of New Orleans Mr. Edwin Forrest made a very favorable impression on his first night of performance ; but the members of the company were

decidedly of the opinion that he evinced very little, if any talent, and that little they considered of the roughest and most unpolished kind. Mr. Forrest's merits were occasionally discussed by the company, and I believe I was the only one of the members who could discover that the young man gave any indications of *genius*. The fact of the matter was that the most of the leading members were of English birth, and in those days there were many well-meaning persons, on and off the "stage," who imagined there was no dramatic talent to be found that was not of British growth. My estimate of the abilities of Mr. Forrest was attributed to the fact that we were both *Western actors*.

Towards the close of the season, and about the time my benefit was to take place, I was asked by Mr. Caldwell what entertainment I proposed for that night, and stating that he wished to cast the pieces and have them put up in the "green-room," that the company might be informed of what study, if any, they had to anticipate. I told him I had been thinking of the tragedy of "*Wallace, the Hero of Scotland*," then a new play in America, written by an Englishman of the name of Walker, a copy of which I had recently obtained. This tragedy was first acted at Covent Garden, November 14, 1820: *Wallace*, by Mr. Macready; *Douglas*, by Mr. Charles Kemble; *Helen*, by Mrs. Bunn. But the piece was not a success. At my benefit, *Helen* was performed by Miss Jane Placide. Mr. Caldwell, having paused a moment, said: "You intend to perform the character of *Wallace* yourself, I presume?" I said: "Not if it can be done without my undertaking the character. I should prefer *Douglas*; it is a part that would be less labor to me and more useful in my general routine of business. Besides, I have no tragedy aspirations at the present day; therefore, *Wallace*, a very lengthy character, would be to me useless and unavailable stock in trade." He then said: "You certainly cannot expect *me*, with all my managerial duties to perform, to be able to study the character within the time proposed?" This objection I had in my own mind anticipated; therefore remarked that I had thought "young Forrest might perform the character very well." At this, for a moment, the manager looked surprised, then said: "Why, surely, Mr. Ludlow, you would not risk the credit of the theatre upon such a venture as that? If I comprehend the play, the success of it depends upon the character of *Wallace* being well acted." "True, sir," said I; "and I think it will be well acted, should Edwin Forrest undertake it." The manager bit his lips for a few moments, and then, in his dignified manner,

said: "Well, sir, I will cast the young man for the character; but remember it will be your benefit night, and if there should be any disappointment, the odium will fall on you." I told him I was willing to risk the result and to accept the "responsibility." On the benefit night the house was well filled, the play well acted, the applause general and frequent, and the curtain went down upon the last act to such decided expressions of satisfaction that, as it descended, I stepped forward and returned thanks to the ladies and gentlemen present for the honor they had done me, and especially for the approbation they had manifested of the performance of my young friend, Edwin Forrest.

I have been somewhat extensive in particularizing this notice of Mr. Forrest, with the view of showing how easy it is, even with the sound judgment that James H. Caldwell usually possessed, for a man to be mistaken in his estimate of another person's abilities, if he once suffers *prejudice* to usurp the place of fairness and reason.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Author leaves Caldwell's Company—Hard Words—Ludlow starts out again as a Manager—Goes to Nashville—Miss Eliza Riddle—Mr. Ludlow makes an Arrangement for the Mobile Theatre—Nashville Season—Huntsville—Preparations to build a Theatre in Huntsville—Cahawba—A Miserable Theatre—Jackson Gray—Actors invited to a Ball—A Funny Strategem—Doubling Coats—Letter from Henry Stickney, of Mobile—Mr. Ludlow proceeds to Mobile—John Stocking, Mayor of the City—John Duncan—Mr. Ludlow undertakes to furnish the Theatre—At Loss for a Scene-painter—Employs a Young Man who afterwards becomes a Thriving Cotton-Merchant—Mobile Theatre opens December 24, 1824—Arrival of Gen. Lafayette—Col. Silas Dinsmore—Ball given to Gen. Lafayette—Talk with the General about Talma—Grand Banquet in Honor of the Election of John Quincy Adams—Season closes—Manager takes his Company to Tuscaloosa—Steamer Echo—Capt. Hayden—Col. John B. Hogan—Company play in Tuscaloosa.

THE season of 1824 in New Orleans closed during the first week of June, with a benefit for the orphan boys of that city.

Nothing further than has been related do I remember of this season, that I suppose would be interesting to the general reader; but I hope I will be pardoned for mentioning an event that occurred during this season, which has always been important as far as my individual feelings have been concerned.

On the 24th of May my wife presented to me our *third* child; a fine, healthy boy, who at once gave decided indications of making himself *heard* in the world.

While writing these little outside personal matters, I would like to state that I have living at this time—at least, I trust so—five children (having lost three), twenty-two grandchildren (having lost three), and five great-grandchildren (having lost one).

About a fortnight after the close of this New Orleans season a notice was put up in the green-room of the theatre, calling upon all those who were not engaged for the summer, and might wish to continue with the company, and return with it to New Orleans the following season, to apply to the manager by a certain date. As I, among others, did not apply, I was asked by the manager whether I intended to withdraw from the company. To which I replied in the affirmative, stating at the same time that I had resolved to try my fortune again as a manager. This information appeared rather to surprise him; but he remarked, very coldly, that he “hoped

I would succeed," and the conversation dropped for the time. Afterwards, I was told, he charged me with creating a rebellion among his company, and inducing some of them to leave him. If he did say so, and I have good reason to believe he did, his charge was unjust. I never made an offer to any member of his company until they applied to me, which some of them did, saying they could not go with Mr. Caldwell's company for the summer, as the salaries he offered would not pay their necessary expenses, — adding at the same time that they *might* return to him for the ensuing winter, provided they got additions to their salaries. The facts were these: I was asked by different persons of the company, at various times, what I proposed to do during the summer. To which I invariably returned the answer, "To commence again management for myself;" that I proposed forming a company of such persons as would be willing to join me, and act on *shares* for the summer; and that for the winter I would have a good theatre in the South, for which I was then negotiating, and I would then undertake to pay stipulated salaries to all such as might see fit to engage with me. The theatre referred to was at Mobile, Alabama; but this I preferred not to mention at the time of these conversations. But I had applied for it, and *did* engage it, as will be seen hereafter.

Before starting with my company from New Orleans, I passed over to Mobile in a schooner, — the only conveyance in those days, — *via* Lakes Pontchartrain and Borgne, and concluded my negotiations for the Mobile theatre, which I found was a brick building of very limited dimensions, enclosed, but not finished. The frame-work for the stage and first tier of boxes was down, but no further inside work had been done. The building, so far, had been erected from funds subscribed by citizens, who, with the owner of the ground, were to receive shares of stock in payment; at \$100 per share. The funds, so far as then subscribed, had been exhausted, and the stockholders were indebted to the man who had contracted to put up and finish the building as fast as supplied by the building committee with the means. The contractor was a Mr. Mount, and this man the building committee had empowered to treat with me for a lease of the premises, provided we could arrange matters for the finishing of the building and opening it as a theatre without calling on them for more money. This arrangement was concluded between Mr. Mount and myself, and he was to have the building ready, with six scenes and their appurtenances, by the 1st of the following November, — about five months from the time of concluding the arrange-

ment. I did not require any security from Mr. Mount for the fulfilment of his contract, for he appeared very anxious to have the building finished, that he might get what money was owing him; and besides, every person that I spoke to on the subject informed me that Mr. Mount was a reliable and a responsible man. This matter being concluded, I returned to New Orleans, and with my company embarked by steamboat for Nashville, where we arrived about the 20th of June, and opened in the same theatre occupied by Messrs. Collins & Jones in 1820. We opened the season on the 23d of June, 1824, with the following company: N. M. Ludlow, manager, and genteel comedian; A. M. Wilson, leading tragedian; Jackson Gray, first old men and some low comedy; George W. Frethy, low comedy; William L. Forrest, second tragedy; Samuel P. Jones, heavy tragedy; Edwin A. Caldwell, second comedy; William Riddle, second old men and sedate fathers; Mrs. M. L. Riddle, leading heavy business; Miss Sarah Riddle, romp and juvenile comedy; Mrs. Ludlow, soubrettes and best old women; Mrs. Mongin, second chambermaids; Mrs. Noke, general utility. Our first play was, I think, the one I usually selected for such a night, Tobin's comedy of the "Honeymoon."

The season here was not good, and we made a short one of it, terminating about the last of July, and proceeding directly to Huntsville, Alabama, where we performed in a large room of a hotel called the "Bell Tavern," kept at that time by a gentleman named Irby Jones. The room I caused to be fitted up with portable scenery that I had brought with me, so constructed as to pack and carry without much trouble. The seats were put up in the usual amphitheatre fashion. Here again we made a season of only five weeks, closing on the 12th of September. I was apprehensive, when I started on the expedition, that it would not prove very remunerative, because it was during the warmest part of the summer, when many persons left the towns for watering-places, and others would not go into any public assemblage, to be packed away with a crowd, where they must necessarily suffer much from the heat of the place; consequently the Nashville and Huntsville seasons were short and unprofitable. Such audiences as we had at Huntsville were generally of a cultivated and highly respectable class of persons.

During the time we were in Huntsville, a few prominent men of the town started the idea of building a theatre. It was to be done by a stock company; each share subscribed to be \$50; the building and grounds to cost \$25,000. In a short time a

sum of about \$10,000 was obtained in names, and a meeting called of the subscribers, at which I was invited to attend. I found that a lot of ground had been subscribed, which the owner had agreed to put in as stock, at a fair valuation; and good names besides, as subscribers, for nearly the sum named above. The subscribers, through their spokesman, said it was their wish that I would lease the theatre when finished, and asked me to contribute to the erection of it. I told them that I could not agree to take stock and pay cash towards the erection of the building, but that if they would erect it, and we could agree upon the terms of a lease, I would put in ten of the most necessary scenes and their appurtenances, and paint the entire inside of the building, as far as would be necessary for its proper opening, and take the whole in stock. This appeared to be satisfactory, and I left them, under the promise that they would go to work vigorously, and in due time inform me when the building would be ready for the inside painting and the scenery; they stating at the same time that they thought it could be got ready by the first of the following month of May.

At the close of this season in Huntsville, Mr. Wilson said that he did not think it would be to his interest to continue with the company, and that he would retire, and with his family lay by for the remainder of the summer, and either join me in Mobile in November, or Mr. Caldwell at New Orleans; and so he left us. Mr. Jackson Gray and Mr. William Forrest also left us at the close of the Huntsville season, to return to Mr. Caldwell.

As this is probably the last opportunity I may have of speaking of these gentlemen again, and as Mr. Gray filled an important line of business for many years in the Western and Southern theatres, I will here say that he was a native of the State of Pennsylvania and the town of Sunbury, born in 1796, and died in his native town, 1837, aged forty-one years. He was a man of activity and intelligence; had been inducted in early youth into commercial life; afterwards, from his own choice, sought to be a printer; but, restless in his nature, he finally joined the stage, where he became a useful man, but displayed no genius. He performed, generally, old men; but they were all alike,—all Jackson Gray. He began his dramatic life in Washington City, in the company of James H. Caldwell, in 1817, and remained under the same management almost his entire theatrical career. Soon after joining the theatre he married a Miss Frazetta, whose father was a musician at one time of good celebrity. She was, I believe, by

birth an American, her father an Italian. Mr. Gray and Miss Frazetta were not congenial, and therefore did not live long together. A divorce ensued, and a few years after Mr. Gray married a young lady of no great dramatic ability, but amiable in disposition. With her he lived till the day of his death. They never had any children, I believe.

Mr. William Forrest returned to Mr. Caldwell's company, and remained with him until the spring of 1826, when he visited Philadelphia, his native city. In 1831 he became one of the firm of Jones, Duffy & Forrest, who made a tolerably fair season, sustained by the acting of Edwin Forrest, in his new plays of "Metamora" and the "Gladiator." He died in Philadelphia in 1833, of cholera. He was the senior of his brother Edwin by two or three years, but possessed not a shadow of his talent.

We proceeded from Huntsville to Cahawba, then the seat of the State government of Alabama. We commenced our performances about the 1st of October, in a building that had been fitted up for dramatic purposes by a company of amateurs. It was a miserable, forlorn-looking building, standing at an outskirt of the town, and poorly arranged for theatrical purposes; besides, it was surrounded with water whenever there was a hard rain, the ground on which it stood being very low. A heavy rain occurred while we were there, and I found, one evening, when I went to the theatre to dress for the night's performance, that I could not get into the building without wading through water six inches deep; so had to keep out of it until my carpenter could build a bridge to the theatre door, from some timbers which had been serving the inhabitants as a sidewalk.

I discovered, in arriving at Cahawba at the time I did, I had made a great mistake; for I had calculated that the residents of the town would support the theatre for a few weeks prior to the meeting of the Legislature, but soon found this was an error. For the first three or four nights the receipts were tolerably good, but afterwards fell off to most miserable pittances, that scarcely paid for lights, printing, and subordinate assistants. After the members of the State Legislature had assembled in the town the receipts of the theatre became somewhat more remunerative, but altogether the venture there terminated unprofitably.

The seasons of Nashville and Huntsville proving very unpropitious, the company's treasury had become reduced to almost nothing; and as actors generally, in those days, spent their money as fast as they acquired it, especially those with-

out families, some of the men were reduced to very ludicrous, and at times disagreeable expedients to appear respectable in their daily attire.

Mr. Samuel Jones and Mr. Edwin Caldwell were theatrical *chums*, and always boarded and roomed together, and indeed at times wore each other's clothing. A somewhat embarrassing circumstance occurred with these young men while they were in Cahawba. They were invited by a gentleman, whose acquaintance they had made since their arrival in that town, to dine at his father's table on a certain day, with some other invited guests, and in the evening join in a dancing party. Now, as we performed at the theatre only three nights in each week, and the night of the dancing being a non-play night, there was no professional impediment in the way of their joining this party of ladies and gentleman. But unfortunately, their wardrobes for such occasions were hardly good enough to enable them to present an appearance suited to their ideas of gentility and propriety. For a time they were in a dilemma between accepting or declining the invitation; but after debating the matter between themselves, it was decided to accept, and the dressing was to be accomplished in this way: Mr. Jones had a coat that he used on the stage for comedy young men, and Mr. Caldwell had a pair of drab cassimere pantaloons used by him for a like purpose. The coat was a light bottle-green cloth, lined with white silk, and mounted with highly polished, fancy steel buttons. With the exception of the white lining, the coat was not much out of the fashion for those days. Jones also had a white vest that was sufficiently good, and very proper. Now, the plan of proceeding was to be in this manner: Caldwell, who never danced if he could avoid it, was to go to the *dinner*, and wear the aforesaid coat, vest, and pantaloons, and after dinner to excuse himself on the score of another appointment, and so withdraw from the party. After Caldwell had divested himself of the said garments, Jones was to encase himself in them and proceed to the same house in time for the evening *dancing*. This was carried out in every particular; and Jones, who was good-looking, and a little vain of it, was flattering himself that he was slaying the hearts of the ladies right and left. One of them in particular he thought he had made a deep impression on, for she seemed earnestly intent in her notice of him, and who at last said: "Mr. Jones, is yours the *fashionable* dress of the day for parties in the large cities?" This for a moment confused him, but he said he soon recovered his equanimity, and replied: "This, Miss, is what we term the 'Dramatic

Club dress,' and it is customary with gentleman of the stage to put on their club dress when they go to parties.'" To this she responded: "Well, I supposed it something out of the common way, for the other gentleman of the theatre had the same kind of dress on to-day when he dined with us." Jones said that just then any body could have bought him for a very small consideration.

About the third week of our sojourn in Cahawba, a letter reached me, post-marked Mobile, from a gentleman named Henry Stickney, an old resident of that city, saying that, having understood that I proposed bringing my theatrical company to Mobile for the ensuing winter, and that I expected to perform in the new theatre, he had taken the liberty to write for the purpose of informing me that the theatre was yet in a very unfinished condition, and that, should I really intend performing in that building soon, it would be well for me to visit Mobile and look into the position of things, for it was his opinion it would take months to put the house in a proper condition to act in. This very much surprised me, as I had reason for supposing that Mr. Mount was rapidly progressing towards the completion of his agreement with me, to have the theatre ready to play in by the 1st of November. One may easily imagine my unpleasant feelings at this information. Here I was with a company on my hands, promising to pay them salaries at Mobile, within a week or two of the time of my intended arrival there, and receiving information that the house could not be got ready to perform in for months to come. I knew nothing of Mr. Stickney, had never been acquainted with anybody of the name; but I determined to proceed without an hour's unavoidable delay to Mobile, and see the real situation of the building. I put this determination into effect the second day after receiving the letter referred to, leaving the company to perform in Cahawba until they should receive a call from me to come on to Mobile.

I was about two days in making my voyage by steamboat to Mobile, arriving there the last of October, and finding the theatre in that unfinished condition as stated to me by Mr. Stickney in his letter. The principal cause of this condition of the building was the illness of Mr. Mount, which prevented him from attending to business for about two months; and although better, was not sufficiently recovered to venture out of doors. I was at a great loss how to proceed, but fortunately I had a letter of introduction given me by a friend, before I left Huntsville, to a Mr. John Stocking, a merchant of Mobile, a man of high standing among commercial men, and very pop-

ular with all who knew him. He was afterwards mayor of Mobile. I presented my letter to Mr. Stocking, and was received by him with great cordiality. Upon his proffering his aid or advice in any way that I might require, I stated to him the awkward position in which I had been placed in consequence of Mr. Mount's failure to complete his contract, and asked him what would be the best course for me to pursue under the circumstances. He advised me take upon myself the task of finishing the house, in which he was sure the stockholders would assist me; that he was one of them; and that any funds I might need for the purpose he thought he could guarantee would be raised by them, upon the assurance that they were to have a company to perform there for a succession of seasons. He regretted that the pressing condition of his business would not allow him to be as active in the matter as he would wish to be, but he would make amends for that by introducing me to a friend of his who was very fond of theatrical amusements, and could assist me more than it was possible for him to do under any circumstances. While we were yet talking of the matter, this friend came into Mr. Stocking's counting-room, and I was introduced to Mr. John Duncan, Jr., also a merchant of Mobile. I found him a high-minded, liberal young Irish gentleman. We soon became friends, and within two hours' time he had introduced me to many of the influential men of Mobile, and all of these gave me the greatest encouragement to proceed with the finishing of the theatre, many of them saying that they would contribute fifty, some a hundred dollars, and take "season tickets" in payment, and these promises were shortly after fulfilled, every one of them. Encouraged by these gentlemen, I immediately saw Mr. Mount, who agreed to assist me in procuring workmen if I would find the means wherewith to pay them weekly, and pay for such lumber and other materials as might be necessary.

I had very little money, but after considering the matter for an hour or two, and consulting with my good friends Stocking and Duncan, I concluded to take upon myself the finishing of the theatre and stock it with scenery, having then in actual money not \$500; but I had strong faith in the men who had promised to back me. Mr. John Duncan constituted himself president and cashier for the stockholders, and myself as superintendent of the work on the building; and in three days from the hour of my landing in Mobile I had about a dozen carpenters at work in the building, which increased to twice that number before a week had elapsed, and on the third week

we had so many that they were in each other's way, and I had to discharge some of them.

After getting the carpenters well at work, I began to look around me for some person who could do *scene-painting*; for I had no such person connected with my company, not supposing I would need one until after commencing my season in Mobile. I soon discovered there was no scene-painter in that city, and I knew of but one in New Orleans, and he was engaged with Mr. Caldwell. There was no other place near, where such a man was likely to be found, and if found, the probabilities were that he had a situation where he received better pay than I could possibly offer him.

I was nonplussed for a time, but after a brief inquiry learned there was a young man in the city who had considerable skill and taste in painting water-color pictures for his own amusement. I obtained an introduction to him, and on looking at some of his paintings, I thought I could make a *scene-painter* of him, if he would undertake it; and this, after some conversations he agreed to. I found he knew nothing of *distemper* painting, as practised by scene-painters; but of *this* I had some knowledge, and I thought I could impart in a short time what I knew of it to him, for he seemed intelligent, and quick to learn any thing. So I procured for him brushes and paints, and other necessary accessories, and he began work. In a short time he came to me for an assistant to mix the paints, make the size, and help him in other ways. After some inquiry, I found a lad who had been with a house-painter, and had some knowledge of paints, and who was glad to obtain a situation where he would have an opportunity of seeing all the plays. I have been somewhat particular in speaking of these two persons, more than I would have done, did I not wish to present them, among others I could name, to disprove the old cant that "young men who connect themselves with theatres are never fit for any other occupation."

Therefore, I will state here that the scene-painter, the initials of whose name were A. S., after doing my painting for one entire season, and after I had obtained a thoroughbred artist, withdrew from the theatre, and in due time became a prominent "cotton man" in Mobile, and a thriving merchant; he is now dead. The boy, his assistant, whose initials are M. W., also withdrew in time, becoming a thriving merchant, acquired a fortune, retired from business, and is now enjoying his "*otium cum dignitate*" in the neighborhood of Mobile.

But, to return to our subject. There were many conjectures

and speculations about the time the theatre would be ready for performances, all of them making the time much longer than suited my convenience or my expectations; in short, there were many bets made on the time, some placing it as long as six months. But these were not my ideas, and I won sundry pairs of gloves, boots, and hats by opening the house for performance on the 24th of December, 1824, about seven weeks from the first day that the carpenters commenced their work. The people were astonished and delighted. Our opening play was my old favorite, the "Honeymoon," followed by the farce of the "Liar." The performances were well received, and the people went away delighted with the idea of having theatrical amusements for the winter. The company soon became very popular, and the society of several of the members sought after. For myself, I received so many marks of kindness and attention from those old and valued friends that I shall never forget them.

My company for this season of Mobile was not strong in men, Messrs. Wilson, Gray, and W. Forrest having returned to Mr. Caldwell's company at New Orleans, a condition they had promised on starting out with me for the summer; of course I could not censure them, although embarrassing to me. In the female department of my company there was considerable talent and attraction. Miss S. Riddle was a great favorite with the theatre-goers at that time, for she was young, handsome, and sprightly, and gifted with great comic powers, which appeared to most advantage in such characters as the *Spoiled Child*, and the whole round of "romps." Later in life she was very excellent in *Sally Scraggs*, and like characters.

Some time in the month of January, 1825, or it may have been in February, Mobile was thrown into great excitement and hilarity by the arrival there of the "national guest," — the great and good general, the Marquis Lafayette. The general was received with the highest demonstrations of respect that were in the power of its citizens to manifest. Among other marks of their regard, a grand ball was given in honor of his arrival, in which the whole of the respectable portions of the citizens participated. My wife and myself being invited, we went, and had the honor of being introduced to Gen. Lafayette by Col. Silas Dinsmore; and as the General did not dance, he had the leisure, and was complaisant enough, to give us the pleasure of his conversation for nearly half an hour. During that time we discoursed the French stage, and the General told me some anecdotes in relation to Talma, the

tragedian, that I had never heard before. He was well acquainted with the great French tragedian, and a warm admirer of him; so much so as to be able to remember and describe to me some of his great points of excellence. He said Talma's admiration of Shakespeare was unbounded; he thought him the *ne plus ultra* of dramatists; and next to him he preferred Calderon, the great Spanish dramatist; then Corneille and Racine, the French dramatic writers. This I thought rather uncommon for a Frenchman, and I was pleased to learn that the great French tragedian had been so free from national prejudices.

The winter of 1824-5 was a very joyous one with Mobilians; business was prosperous; people were liberal with their money, and generally disposed to enjoy themselves. There were many delightful parties given, and much sociability prevailed generally. One of the festive occasions of the season was a grand banquet, given early in March, in honor of the inauguration of John Quincy Adams as president of the United States. The partisans of Mr. Adams made a grand affair of it; and with them, their friends, and invited guests there was a great feast. Among the latter I had the pleasure of being one, and the honor of being seated on one side of Mr. Rust, a prominent lawyer of the city, president of the festal board; while Dr. Warren, a clergyman, occupied a seat on the other side of the president. After the regular toasts, and when the wine had begun to circulate freely, a gentleman at the farther end of the table gave us a volunteer toast: "the Pulpit, Bar, and Stage," which was drunk with apparent general satisfaction. Mr. Rust being considered then at the head of the bar in Mobile, rose and responded for the bar; Dr. Warren followed, and spoke for the pulpit; and I found myself placed in a position quite unexpected, yet calling on me to say something. I got up and said *something*, but I cannot recollect what it was, except thanking the citizens generally for their hospitality and their support of the "stage," and promising to do more for the Drama in the future than I had been able to accomplish during the current season. The banquet concluded with general satisfaction to all present.

Before closing this chapter, and the Mobile season, I desire to say something in relation to this theatre, it being the *first one built in the city*, and mine the *first regular company* that played in the city of Mobile. The building was of brick, and erected on a part of the site of an old fort, built and occupied by Spaniards during the time when the country was a portion of the territory of Spain. The theatre stood on the north-west

corner of Royal and Theatre Streets, the latter taking its name after the erection of the theatre. It had a front of about sixty feet on Royal Street, running back west about one hundred and ten feet. It was arranged with a pit and two tiers of boxes, and would seat between six and seven hundred people. The centre of the upper tier was partitioned off for the use of the colored population; this was subdivided so as to accommodate a certain class of them known as "quad-rooms," who, having a portion of white blood in their veins, would not condescend to mix with those that had purely negro blood, and whom they looked upon as an inferior class.

My first Mobile season terminated about the middle of May, 1825, with benefits to the different members of the company; and they were generally well attended. Miss Sarah Riddle had at her benefit as many as could crowd into the house. Mrs. Riddle's, my own, and my wife's were all three satisfactory; and the other members had nothing to complain of. The citizens seemed anxious to assure us that we were welcome visitors; and actors and audience separated reluctantly and with kindly feelings each for the other. On the closing night, at the end of the performance, I was called for. I went before the drop-curtain and made them a short speech, in which I thanked them for past favors, and solicited a continuance of them in the future, at the same time promising to endeavor to produce for the following season a more finished condition of the building interiorly, and, if they could be obtained, some valuable additions to the *corps dramatique*. Before leaving the city, three or four of the ladies of the company had sent to them, from their friends, neat little complimentary presents of jewelry; and for myself, I was the recipient of a handsome cane, mounted with gold and ivory, and which I retain at this time, nearly fifty years from the day of the gift. About the time of closing my Mobile season, I received a letter from Mr. Antonio Mondelli, an Italian, who had been officiating with Mr. James H. Caldwell as scenic artist at New Orleans for about two years, offering his services to paint a stock of scenery for me during the summer, and if we could agree on terms, would remain with me the ensuing winter season. I was very glad to obtain his services in that way, and desired him to meet me at Mobile prior to my departure from that city for the summer. He came, and I engaged him for six months, to go to work at once, and to paint six stock scenes, with their necessary "wings," or side-scenes, borders, and other appurtenances, and to have all ready by the first of the ensuing November; for which I agreed to give him a certain sum.

There was a condition in his engagement that before my fall and winter season should have commenced he was to be paid \$50 per week, for not less than sixteen weeks. I also arranged with carpenters for a certain amount of work to be done about the stage, very important and necessary. I further engaged men to cushion and cover the seats in the "dress circle," and to put up curtains and draperies for the decoration of the "boxes."

During the progress of the season, I had been turning my thoughts towards finding some retreat the coming summer for myself and company, likely to be more profitable and less expensive to reach and return from than Nashville. A number of persons from Tuscaloosa, who had visited Mobile during the season, were desirous of having me bring my company to that town, then a thriving place, and saying at the same time that the people were very fond of amusements. Tuscaloosa is situated at the head of navigation on the Black Warrior River, and about four hundred and eighty miles by water from Mobile. As there was a small steamboat running there, whenever there was water enough in the Warrior, and as that was the situation of the river in May of that year, I decided to pay Tuscaloosa a visit with my company. The proprietor of the largest hotel in the place, Col. John B. Hogan, had called on me in Mobile, and, among other arguments used to induce me to visit his town, offered me the use of a large ball-room in his hotel for my performances, free of any charge, — he calculating to be remunerated by the sales at his bar-room on play-nights, and by the boarding of my company. I found him quite a gentleman, and for years after we were warm friends. So, to Tuscaloosa we went, making the trip in about three days. The steamer on which we went, I think, was called the "Echo," and was commanded by Capt. Jeremiah (or Nehemiah) Hayden.

CHAPTER XXV.

Pleasant Time in Tuscaloosa — Author becomes a Freemason — And so does his Wife — Company return to Mobile and begin the Season there — Mondelli, the Painter — Thomas Placide — His Tragedy — A. W. Jackson — Vos and Wife — “Rowley” Marks — Samuel Emberton — Miss Eliza Riddle’s First Attempt at Acting — Wonderful Effect — Conclusion of the Season — Manager decides to go to New York.

THE following persons composed the *first company* of comedians that performed in Tuscaloosa, Alabama: N. M. Ludlow, manager and actor; John H. Wells, William Riddle, Samuel P. Jones, Edwin A. Caldwell, George W. Frethy, George O. Champlin, Henry Young, Edward Morrison, Mrs. Mary Riddle, Miss Sarah Riddle, Mrs. Ludlow, Mrs. Mongin, and Mrs. Noke; William C. Noke, leader of the orchestra; Victor F. Mongin, treasurer; M. D. Sager, carpenter; Mrs. Sager, wardrobe-keeper. Our season, although not profitable, was comfortable. The town was small, — not over twenty-five hundred inhabitants; but, for the number, they turned out well in support of the Drama, and we got through the summer without losing any money. We performed but three nights in each week, so had plenty of time for recreation; and as we found the people of the town quite agreeable, our time passed very pleasantly. During the summer I performed prodigies in the way of acting, — in quantity, if not in quality; doing *Virginius*, in the tragedy of that name, and *Nipperkin*, in the comic opera of “The Sprigs of Laurel,” the latter a low-comedy character. On another occasion I performed *Macbeth*, in Shakespeare’s tragedy of that name, and *Shelty*, in the comic opera of the “Highland Reel,” another low-comedy character. I had heard of Garrick having performed, on the same evening, tragedy and low comedy; and I had seen the elder Junius B. Booth do *Sir Edward Mortimer*, in the “Iron Chest,” and *Jerry Sneak*, in Foote’s farce of the “Mayor of Garratt,” on the same evening, having performed with him in both pieces, and I thought I might attempt something of the kind in a country town, where they never before had any theatricals; and I will venture to say that neither of those great actors got more applause, considering the number of persons, than I did

for my bold attempt. Well Shakespeare says, "one man in his time plays many parts;" it was hard work, though.

About the middle of October we left the good citizens of Tuscaloosa, much gratified with our visit, and many invitations on one side and promises on the other to return there the following summer.

It may be a matter of wonderment with some people that a town containing a population of only 2,500 persons could remunerate a company of comedians for twenty weeks in succession; but our expenses were low, and price of admission high, being \$1. Besides, it should be borne in mind that in all new countries the early inhabitants are very fond of amusements, and when an opportunity occurs of gratifying that fondness, they make a general turn-out. The first adventurers to a new country are generally bold and active spirits, with an unbounded desire of novelty and excitement. Such have, besides, a considerable amount of romance in their natures, and take hold of the ideal with an eager though rude grasp.

During this fall I was admitted a member of the Masonic fraternity, and, to use a Hibernicism, so was my wife. In other words, I became a "Free and Accepted Ancient York Mason." I afterwards rose to the high degree of "Royal and Select Master." My wife was admitted to the degree of "Heroine of Jericho," a side degree conferred on the wife of a "Royal Arch Mason." During the month of November there was a grand Masonic ball given, which my wife and I attended, she wearing the badge of her degree; and as there were only three ladies, including herself, thus decorated, they were, of course, objects of considerable notice. It was a joyous night, and much happiness prevailed.

I opened my second season in Mobile about the middle of November, 1825, with some additions to my company, and considerable improvement in the appearance and comfort of the theatre. Mr. Mondelli had painted a number of scenes, and much improved the whole interior of the building. The seats had been cushioned, and neatly covered with moreen, and the whole *auditorium* presented a lighter and more cheering aspect than it had done on the previous season. On the opening of the house, Mr. Mondelli left me to return to New Orleans, but with the understanding he was to join me the following summer, and continue through the winter immediately ensuing.

Early in 1826 Mr. Thomas Placide arrived from New Orleans, to which place he had come from the East in expecta-

tion of getting an engagement with Mr. Caldwell ; but being a novice, he failed in his expectations. As I had known his brother Henry, when a boy, in the Albany (New York) theatre, and his sisters, Eliza and Jane, I gave him an engagement at \$10 per week, for general utility. This gentleman became afterwards one of the most popular comedians in the South and West, by many esteemed, in certain characters, equal to his brother Henry, and this was no small praise ; for I believe it will be admitted by all who remember this latter gentleman that his performance of *Grandfather Whitehead*, *Sir Peter Teazle*, *Sir Harcourt Courtley*, and many others of these lines of characters, has never been surpassed, if equalled, in the United States. Thomas Placide, when he joined my company, was young and good-looking. As such, the best use I could make of an entire novice was to put him into the line of what is technically known as “ walking gentlemen,”—meaning good-looking young men, well-dressed, and representing lovers, etc. About the time this gentleman joined us, I was producing a drama, then new and popular, entitled “ *Therese, the Orphan of Geneva*.” I supposed Mr. Placide might do very well as the representative of the youthful *Count de Morville*, the lover of the *Orphan* ; but the very first night of the piece satisfied me that Mr. Placide’s talent would not run smoothly in the sentimental track,—for, in a scene where the *Count’s* excited feelings call on him to defend the loved one of his heart, Mr. Placide exclaimed, in the most enthusiastic manner but the most ludicrous tones : “ It is all a plot of ha-ell ! ” It was too much ; the audience had stood a considerable amount of his tragedy, but this last blow was too overpowering ; there was a general roar through the house, and the piece was done for, at least for that night, and I never called upon him to tragedize after that effort. I believe it satisfied Mr. Placide himself that his *forte* was not tragedy, for I never heard of his being guilty of the like again. He left me at the close of the season, and in May went to New York, where he got an engagement at the Chatham Theatre, then under the management of Mr. Henry Wallack, father of the late J. W. Wallack, Jr., and uncle of the present New York manager, Mr. Lester Wallack.

During this season, some time in December, 1825, a man applied to me, as a novice, for a situation as an actor. My company not being very full, I gave him a situation for general utility, at a salary of \$10 per week. He called himself Wilton, but his real name was Abraham W. Jackson, pretty well known many years after as manager of the New York

Bowery Theatre. This man was familiarly known, during the latter portions of his life, among the profession as "Black Jack." This name he got in consequence of his features, which did not impress one very favorably towards him. He had a black beard, sinister look of the eye, and a slow, cautious expression. He was said to be of Hebrew parentage. In time he became a pretty good representative of stage villains, towards which his face and manner were great aids. I remember to have seen him, very early in his career, perform *Paul Lafont* very well, in Lovell's play of "Love's Sacrifice." He was in my company two or three years, after which I lost sight of him for many years, but finally heard of him as having been managing a theatre in New York, where, it was said, he made some money, and retired from the stage. He died in the city of New York, May, 1866.

In the early part of this season, January and February, I also engaged John H. Vos and his wife, persons I have spoken of as having met in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1816, and in St. Louis in 1819. Mr. Vos had become a pretty good actor in tragedy heroes,—rough and crude, yet attended with some signs of genius. His wife played second old women.

Another couple, about the same time, came from New Orleans and joined my company,—one Albert J. Marks and wife. He was generally known among his professional brethren as "Rowley Marks," having obtained this *sobriquet* from having, in Charleston, South Carolina, gained some credit by performing old *Rowley*, in the "School for Scandal,"—the only character he had ever been given credit for in the public prints, and which he was very fond of showing and bragging on; but he was old *Rowley* in every thing. "Rowley" Marks was a short, fat, round-faced, good-natured little Jew, and was somewhat a favorite with the public, inasmuch as that he contrived to make the people laugh, which some seemed to think was all that was required of a comedian. He had a wife, a pretty little woman, without much talent, but much respected by all who knew her. In New Orleans, in after years, I believe Mr. Marks occasionally officiated as a rabbi, being of the tribe of Levi, and a lineal descendant from Aaron, the ancient high priest.

Samuel Emberton joined my company about the same time that Mr. Marks did. Mr. E. was a printer by trade and an actor by profession, and he was tolerable as both; but he had a *misfortune* that prevented his professional advancement. I say a misfortune, for through some strange and unaccountable influence—at least to him—he was not infrequently seized

with a *dizziness* that affected his head while on the stage, that to an uninformed observer had very much the appearance of intoxication; but when I charged him with inebriety, he called it "dizziness," and would declare solemnly that he had not "drank a drop" the last twenty-four hours. In the "rules and regulations" of the theatre, required to be signed by every one that joined the company, there was a heavy forfeiture for any one found guilty of drinking liquors while in process of performing on the stage. When this "dizziness" had occurred some three or four times, I charged Mr. E. with deceiving me; but he still persisted in saying he had not "drank a drop." But on my putting him on his honor whether he was not under the influence of liquor, he admitted that it was possible liquor had something to do with the *phenomena*; "for," said he, "you know, Mr. Ludlow, that the room the musicians use to retire in is adjoining my dressing-room, and they often have liquor in there, and when their door stands open, as it often does, I sometimes fancy it affects my head in some strange way." I have no doubt he thought I was satisfied with his theory; but so far from it was I that I set to work, upon this hint, to find the real truth, and so mentioned what he had said to the leader of the orchestra, who declared he had never seen any of the musicians introduce liquor into their room. It was not long after this conversation when the leader called me privately out of the green-room, and took me to the "lamp-room" (we had no gas then), where, seated with his back to the door, was Mr. E., with a paper of *sponge-cakes*, dipping them into a tumbler partly filled with *brandy*, and then *eating* them. At the end of the week, when he presented himself for his week's salary, he was told it was forfeited, and a slip of paper handed him stating what for. He came to me, full of indignation at the injustice done him, saying he was ready to make oath that he had not *drank* a drop of liquor behind the scenes on the night specified; to which I replied: "No, not 'drank,' but you *ate* at least a half tumbler of brandy or whiskey." When he found that I had detected his trick, he burst into a fit of laughter and walked away. The next day I ordered his salary to be paid him, he having pledged me his *honor* that he would not drink nor *eat* a drop of liquor during hours of performance, for the residue of the season; and he kept his word,—at least, I discovered no more "dizziness" during the time.

My company for this season of 1825-6 consisted of N. M. Ludlow, John H. Vos, Samuel Emberton, William Riddle, John H. Wells, Samuel P. Jones, Edwin A. Caldwell, A.

Wilton Jackson, Thomas Placide, Albert J. Marks (known in the profession as "Rowley Marks"), George O. Champlin, George W. Frethy, Thomas Ballou, John Young, and B. McKinney; Mrs. Mary Riddle, Miss Sarah Riddle, Mrs. Ludlow, Mrs. Vos, Mrs. Mongin, Mrs. Noke, and Mrs. Marks. Of these twenty-two persons, all are *dead*, I believe, except N. M. Ludlow and William Riddle. Towards the close of this season Miss Eliza L. Riddle, the youngest daughter of Mrs. Riddle, made her first appearance, then about sixteen years of age, in a farce, I think, called the "Turnpike Gate." Being young and naturally timid, her voice was at times inaudible; but she made one "point" in the character (*Mary*) that was remembered for a long time. *Mary* has a lover whom she has received addresses from under the assumed name of *Nugent*. As well as I can remember, he is supposed to be dead, but unexpectedly presents himself before her. On seeing him she exclaims, "Good heavens! My Nugent!" and this was uttered by her in such a comic-tragic manner as to produce a general laugh through the house and behind the scenes, and poor Eliza was so mortified that she declared she would never act again on the stage as long as she lived. To add to her discomfort, her sister, Sarah, who was "nothing unless comical," would for years after call her nothing but "My Nugent." This young lady in after years became a very popular actress, and known as Miss Eliza Riddle, and afterwards as Mrs. J. M. Field. About ten years subsequent to her first appearance in Mobile, she came to me as a leading actress in my theatres of St. Louis and Mobile, at which time I saw her perform *Julia*, in the "Hunchback;" and I have never seen it better played, although I have witnessed the efforts of other ladies in the character, of greater professional fame. She was, I believe, the first representative of that character in America, having performed it in Philadelphia, at the Arch Street Theatre, during the season of 1831-2, giving great satisfaction.

At the conclusion of my season in Mobile, Mrs. Riddle and two daughters left my company to return to Philadelphia, where they had formerly resided.

My season in Mobile this year (1826) terminated the last of April; and although it might not be thought a great season in the present day of theatricals in these United States, yet then I was very well satisfied with it, and I believe the public were equally well satisfied with the company. The society of the leading members of the theatre was sought after, and many pleasant little parties and suppers occurred during the season.

Having wound up my affairs for the season, and made an arrangement with Mr. Mondelli to come to Mobile during the summer and paint some additional scenery for my reopening the ensuing fall, I thought it advisable to go to New York to recruit my forces in the way of actors and musicians. Besides, I had been absent from my native city eleven years ; had married, and had three children born to me ; none of these had my mother and sister ever seen.

My wife went to New York by sea, taking two of our children with her ; and I went by the Western country, where I had some business to transact *en route* to New York.

CHAPTER XXVI.

He leaves for New York by way of Mississippi River—Joyful Meeting after Ten Years' Absence—Author's First Appearance in New York—Author visits Philadelphia—Mrs. Jefferson—Old Jefferson—The Original Jefferson—Old Francis and his Adopted Son, Tom Scrivener—Funny Scene—Mr. Forrest's First Appearance in New York—Mr. Gilfert engages Mr. Forrest—Manager leaves New York to return West by way of Pittsburg—Trip Over the Alleghany Mountains—He plays in the Old Theatre in Pittsburg.

I LEFT Mobile about the middle of May, *via* New Orleans and the Mississippi River by steamboat to Louisville, thence to Philadelphia and New York City. Nothing transpired during the journey that would, probably, prove interesting to the general reader. I called on my old friend and former manager, Samuel Drake, Sr., at Louisville, and found that he still continued his circuit of theatres, as when I was with him in 1815–16, namely, Louisville, Frankfort, and Lexington. I stopped a few hours at Cincinnati, and found the Columbia Street Theatre still standing, but unoccupied; this was the theatre that had been originally leased to Collins & Jones, and was opened first about the year 1820. I also stopped a few hours in Pittsburg, and found the same old theatre standing in which I had performed with Mr. Drake's company in 1815. I made an arrangement to occupy this building on my return from New York, *en route* to Mobile, with such a company as I might get together during the summer. I reached New York the first day of June, and found my wife and children there, and well. It was a joyful meeting when we were all assembled under the same roof with my sister and mother, whom I had not seen in eleven years. My sister had married in the interim, and was the mother of two children; my mother, the object of my worship next to my God, was residing with my sister, but was old and infirm; and not many years after died, as did also my sister. My visit to my native city produced mixed feelings of joy and melancholy; joy at once more meeting those whose blood flowed from the same original fountain as my own,—I mean my brother and my sister,—and the blessedness of finding that “fountain” still a *living* one. These were sources of great happiness to me, only diminished by the absence of some faces, once dear, and now passed away forever

from this world. I hope the reader will pardon me for relating a personal incident that occurred shortly after my arriving in the city, and although to some it may appear trifling, was to me pleasurable, and yet painful; showing an additional instance of how strong and lasting are the remembrances of our youth. Returning one day from the residence of my sister, then in the suburbs of the city, after walking by hundreds of buildings that had been erected on what I had formerly known as open fields, I had got down into an older portion of the city, but yet a portion I had no recollection of, and I became bewildered, not knowing which way to go; suddenly a feeling of loneliness came over me and I began to fancy myself a stranger in my native city. I rambled on a little further, without knowing whether I was making towards my point of destination or not, when I accidentally came in sight of a small triangular park that I thought I remembered. Here I paused, and looking around me, at last discovered, among the fine brick buildings that surrounded this park, a long, low, red frame house, almost hidden by the grandeur around it, in which I had first learned to read and write, — it was my *old school-house*! I stepped up to it, and gazing into its windows, my school-boy days came back to me again. I remembered all the pretty little girls that I used to love there, and the jolly boys with whom I was wont to play; in brief, I felt I “was a boy again;” and as I turned away with a sigh, a pocket-handkerchief was necessary to remove the dew that had collected around my eyes.

In New York I found theatricals were “duller than the fat weed that rots itself in ease on Lethe’s wharf.” The Park Theatre was about to close for the season, when the only one open would be the Chatham, then under the temporary management of Mr. Henry Wallack, brother of James W. Wallack, the elder, founder of Wallack’s Theatre, Broadway. I say “temporary,” for he continued in it only about a year, having taken it about a month after the death of Monsieur Barriere, the proprietor and first manager of it, who died in February, 1826. Mr. Wallack was compelled to wind up his management in April, 1827, for lack of support.

Thomas Placide made his first appearance in New York some time in the month of June, 1826, in the Chatham Theatre, then under the management of Henry Wallack; but his reception was not flattering.

Finding matters so very dull in New York, my wife and I went to Philadelphia, to pay a visit to our much-esteemed friend, Mrs. Cornelia Burke, after whom our first daughter

was named. We found the lady recently married again, to Mr. Joseph Jefferson, scenic artist, afterwards father of Joseph Jefferson of *Rip Van Winkle* renown; Mr. Thomas Burke, her former husband, having been dead about a year. Our meeting with this lady was a very pleasant one; we had not seen her since the voyage we made with her to Virginia from New Orleans in the summer of 1821. We presented to her the little namesake, then five years of age, who was greatly admired by Mrs. Jefferson and her friends. While in Philadelphia I had the pleasure of beholding a performance of "old Jefferson," as he was then called, grandfather of the present Joseph Jefferson. I had seen Mr. Jefferson in New York when I was a youth of seventeen years of age, early in the year 1812, when Mr. W. B. Wood and Mr. J. Jefferson came to New York to perform, while Mr. Cooper and others went from New York to Philadelphia for the like purpose. I was delighted with Mr. Jefferson when I saw him then, as a boy; I was not less so when I now beheld him with professional eyes and some experience. The comedy that I saw played in Philadelphia was by Frederic Pilon, and entitled "He Would be a Soldier," with the following cast of characters, as far as I can recollect at this time: *Sir Oliver Oldstock*, Mr. W. Warren, father of the present admirable comedian, William Warren, well known in Boston, Massachusetts; *Captain Crevelt*, Mr. George Barrett, for many years well known as a genteel comedian in the Eastern, Western, and Southern theatres; *Caleb*, Mr. Jefferson; *Charlotte*, the beautiful Mrs. Barrett, first wife of Mr. George Barrett,—all dead! In Mr. Jefferson's acting there was a perfection of delineation I have seldom, if ever, seen in any other comedian of his line of characters; not the least attempt at exaggeration to obtain applause, but a naturalness and truthfulness that secured it, without the appearance of any extraordinary efforts from him. The nearest approach to his style is that of his grandson of the same name.

We passed a very pleasant week in Philadelphia, occasionally visiting Mrs. Jefferson, who was always excellent company herself; and in addition to this we often met with very agreeable persons at her house, who were in the habit of visiting her. Mrs. Jefferson was of French parentage; her father, Monsieur Thomas, was a musician, and he gave his daughter a good musical education. Her first efforts on the stage were in singing characters, such as *Rosina*, in the comic opera of "Rosina, or The Reapers;" *Countess*, in "John of Paris;" and *Virginia*, in "Paul and Virginia," and the like. I

remember her singing in those English operas with much pleasure. She performed *Blanche of Devon*, in the melo-drama of the "Lady of the Lake," on the night that I made my first appearance in Mr. Caldwell's company, in New Orleans, in 1821. She also performed simply *speaking* characters very well. The first time that I remember to have seen her was at Albany (1814-15), in the character of *Susan Ashfield*, in "Speed the Plough," on the occasion when I made my clandestine appearance as *Bob Handy's* servant, and was complimented on it by Mr. Burke.

The Philadelphia spring season of 1826 had terminated in April, and Messrs. Wood & Warren had taken their company to Baltimore, where they were expected to make a good season during the summer. Mr. Edmund Kean came there to play an engagement of a few nights, not long after the difficulty he had escaped from in Boston. The people of Baltimore, recollecting his conduct in the former city, determined he should not play an engagement with them; and a disturbance ensued that compelled the managers, Wood & Warren, to close the house and return to Philadelphia, reopening their theatre in that city early in June.

Among those to whom I was introduced at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Jefferson, Jr., was old Mr. Francis. This gentleman had long been among the prominent members of Messrs. Wood & Warren's companies, and was considered an excellent actor in testy old men; but age and gout (the latter inherited) had determined him to withdraw from his profession, which he had done at the end of the spring season. On the occasion of an evening party, of which Mr. Francis had been one, but who had retired early to his room, I was told a joke as occurring with him that I have never seen in print, and which perhaps will bear relating here. Mr. Francis, though a man "full of the milk of human kindness," was at times very passionate, especially when suffering with an attack of the gout, a not infrequent visitor to him. Mr. Francis and wife never had any children, but in the kindness of their hearts they had adopted two, a boy and a girl; their name, I think, was Scrivener.

The boy, familiarly called "Tom Scrivener," when he grew up to manhood, was rather wayward and unmanageable. He was at the time of this incident officiating as prompter — probably at the Baltimore theatre, — a very responsible situation; but Tom, at times, would become forgetful of the dignity of his office, and come to the theatre of a morning (ten o'clock, the usual hour) with his ideas rather "mixed" with

“mint-juleps” and “gin-cocktails.” On one occasion these “mixed” affairs had produced an unsteadiness of movement that, when traversed, strongly resembled a country “worm-fence.” His patient adopted father had warned him against these little *matinée* indulgencies, with the mild remark that if he persisted in this course he would “kick him out of the theatre.” Tom for a month had appeared, as far as the old man could discover, to feel and respect this paternal suggestion; but one unlucky day, the devil, in the form of sundry gin-cocktails, seduced him, — in fact, he became badly seduced. Rehearsal time came, but no Tom came; the rehearsal was commenced at the proper minute. In about a half-hour after, a man was seen to come suddenly from behind the scenes and make a dive for the “prompt-table” on the stage; he missed the table, but caught at a chair, with which he contrived to steady himself. The old gentleman’s Christian spirit forsook him; and raising his cane over Tom’s head, said, in his usual mild manner: “Tom, you d—d rascal, didn’t I tell you that if I found you drunk again before dinner that I would kick you out of the theatre?” Tom straightened himself up as well as he could, and looking the old man full in the eyes, said: “You — (hic) — you did; but I’ve — (hic) — I’ve *dined* (hic) an hour ago.” And so he had. He had eaten an extra meal at nine o’clock A. M., and called it dinner.

I returned to New York without making any engagements for my company. The fact was, there were very few good performers in the United States at that day, and those few were permanently engaged at the three or four principal theatrical cities of the country, viz., New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Charleston. The managers in those cities paid good actors better salaries than could be accorded them in those of more limited populations, and consequently there was great difficulty in getting actors to go to the Ohio and Mississippi valleys. I remained in and about New York until early in August. Prior to my quitting that city for the West, I met my young friend Edwin Forrest, whom I had left in the spring of 1824 a member of the company of James H. Caldwell, in New Orleans. He informed me that he had continued in Mr. Caldwell’s company until the spring of the present year (1826), when, having a difficulty with him, he suddenly withdrew and came to New York; there he had been solicited by Mr. Woodhull to perform for his benefit, then about to come off at the Park Theatre. He consented to do so, and made his first appearance before a New York public on the 23d of April (Shakespeare’s birthday), 1826, in the character of *Othello*,

to a well-filled house, that gave him a generous reception. The Bowery Theatre was then in progress of building for Mr. Charles Gilfert as lessee. This gentleman, pleased with the first efforts of young Forrest, engaged him as a leading tragedian. The first theatre built in the Bowery was by a stock company of citizens, and opened October 23, 1826, under the title of the "New York Theatre—Bowery;" but Forrest did not appear till November 6th, and then as *Othello*. In this theatre did Mr. Forrest build up a histrionic popularity that has never been exceeded in New York by any man within the history of the Drama in that city.

During my stay in New York I engaged ten professional performers and six novices. Among the regulars was William Anderson, a good actor in heavy characters, tragedy villains, and the like. This gentleman, at one time, held a good position in the Charleston and Philadelphia theatres. During the latter period he married a daughter of the elder Jefferson; but, owing to his irregularity of habits, after a few years they separated. Mr. E. R. Davis and wife joined my company, from the Albany and Rochester theatres. Mr. Davis was a useful actor in comedy and juvenile tragedy, but very unpleasant in business,—always imagining himself a crushed individual. Mrs. Davis had very little talent, at that time that I could discover. Mr. George T. Rowe and wife, and his sister Caroline, joined me from Philadelphia. Mrs. Rowe, formerly Miss Fenton, had been some years on the stage, and was a useful woman. This lady and her husband were with me many years after, but finally they settled down in New Orleans, in consequence of their daughter becoming the wife of Mr. James H. Caldwell. This, the third wife of Mr. Caldwell, died soon after marriage. Mr. Rowe officiated for many years as prompter of different theatres, and was a reliable, intelligent, and quiet man. At the death of Mr. Caldwell, it was found that he had left Mrs. Rowe a handsome piece of property in New Orleans. Miss Rowe was one of the most useful actresses it was ever my lot to have,—always willing, always capable, and ready to assist the manager in any dilemma. She was one that I used to call my "little nugget of gold." She was a great favorite with my wife and myself. Mr. J. E. Watson was an Englishman, and an actor of good general utility. About three years after joining me, he married Miss Caroline Rowe. They remained with me for a considerable number of years. Mrs. Mary J. Ball had been an actress about two years, was a Canadian by birth, and had been educated at a convent in Montreal, from which she ran away with an officer of the British

army, stationed at Quebec ; who, after living with her a year or more, perhaps, left her the mother of one little girl, that died soon after. Mrs. B. joined my company. Mrs. Ball had been neglected by her relatives, and she had recourse to the stage for a support. She was a pretty, blue-eyed, round-faced woman, small, but a very neat figure, and always a favorite on and off the stage. Messrs. A. W. Jackson, Thomas Gough, and Philip Le Brun were useful men. The lady novices I engaged were Miss Mary Ann Meek and Emeline and Almira Dunham. These three young ladies were very handsome, the latter two being twins, and so much alike that they were often mistaken for each other. It was a considerable time before I could tell one from the other, unless they were both present, or I could recollect some difference in their dressing. There were three young men, scarcely more than entire novices, whom I engaged in New York, viz., William A. Kidd, William Rutter, and James Byrnes.

Having engaged as many persons as it was convenient for me to take over the mountains, I left New York about the 10th of August to return to Mobile, intending to stop and perform at Pittsburg. We went from New York to Philadelphia, and there took stage-coaches, the only mode of conveyance at that day over the Alleghany Mountains.

At New Brunswick we met with an accident that was near proving a very serious matter to us. We had crossed the Raritan River, and were proceeding at a rapid rate up an ascending piece of ground, when my wife called my attention to a back wheel of the coach which had come off, and was rolling down the ground behind us. Others saw it about the same moment, and the ladies were preparing to jump out of the coach windows. Upon the impulse of the moment I encircled four of them in my arms, and held them from an act that would have probably been the means of crippling, perhaps killing some of them. The horses were at full speed, which the driver kept up until he was able to sheer them in against a post, which struck the front axle-tree and stopped their speed ; the coach then rolled over on one side, and the passengers came down together in one mass within the coach body, not one of us being in any way seriously injured. It was, I believe, the very place where Mr. James Wallack, about four years previous to our time, received injuries by the upsetting of a stage-coach, and was disabled in such a way that he could not attend to his professional duties for many months. After a tedious trip of about five days we reached Pittsburg, worn out and almost half-dead from want of sleep. Two or three days of

active work, and I had got the old theatre in a condition to open. I had found it in a most wretchedly dilapidated state; and it could have been nothing less than a strong desire for theatricals that could have induced people to visit such a building in the hot month of August. We opened on the 20th, with the comedy of the "Honeymoon" (my old favorite), and the farce of the "Rendezvous." The second night we performed the "Iron Chest," and farce of "A Day After the Wedding;" the part of *Sir Edward Mortimer* by Mr. W. Anderson. Shortly after our opening we were joined by two young gentlemen who had followed us from New York in hopes of procuring a chance to become actors. One called himself Horatio N. Barry, the other, Charles Francis Staunton; but such were not their real names. I engaged them upon very small salaries; they remained with me many years. Staunton, whose real name was McClure, afterwards married Miss Marian Meek, who had also joined me as a novice. The other young gentleman, after years of a rambling theatrical life, left the stage and returned to his friends in New York. Many years after he left me, as I was walking on Broadway, New York, a gentleman walked up to me, and taking my hand very kindly, said: "Mr. Ludlow, you do not recollect me, I suppose; my name is F——, but you have known me only as Barry, under which name I was a member of your company for years, in times long past." He told me he was then in business in that city; that he had a factory not far from New York, and that he was accumulating a fortune. We had some pleasant talk about old times, — but I am wandering from my true path.

I wish to say here — what, perhaps, would have been more in order in an earlier part of this chapter — that during this visit of mine to New York, I performed one night (June 29, 1826) the character of *Young Wilding*, in Foote's three-act comedy of the "Liar," being for the benefit of my young friend Miss Sarah Riddle, afterwards known as Mrs. W. H. Smith. This was my first professional appearance in my native city.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Pretended Friend—Plan for a Transfer of Funds—No go—The Wrong Man in the Wrong Place—A Clandestine Marriage—The Company descend the Ohio—A Gondola or Barge—A New Method of Travel—Capt. Baldwin—Death of my First Son—Mrs. Ball—A Rover of the Seas—A Romantic Adventure—Thomas A. Cooper—Mobile Season Closes—Company leave for Nashville—Capt. R. tried for Piracy—Company ascend the River—Mrs. Ball leaves the Company.

OUR season in Pittsburg was not the most lucrative one I ever had, yet I received a small amount of money more than my expenses; but even that small amount some of my *friends* (?) thought would be safer in their pockets than in mine. So, on one non-play night (we performed but four nights in each week) I was invited to pass a "social evening" at the house of a certain general, who shall be nameless. I consented, and joined them, in the expectation that I should pass a pleasant evening with an agreeable party of ladies and gentlemen. I had not been in the house half an hour when I was undeceived, and discovered it was to be entirely a masculine party, and that cards, wine, and supper were to constitute the treat of the evening; to all three of which, I felt, to say the least, a positive indifference.

It was soon proposed by the general that we should all go to his small wine-room and taste some of his wines, and then adjourn to his library and sit down to cards until called to supper. We at once proceeded to carry out this programme.

When we were about to be seated, the general was kind enough to place me at the table with himself and party,—all *gentlemen*, of course,—doctors, lawyers, bankers, bank officers, etc.

They proposed to me to take a hand at cards with them, and were polite enough to ask me what game I preferred to play! I replied that I preferred not to play at all; that I took no pleasure in cards, and did not understand any game well enough to afford the least amusement; and this was strictly true. But the general insisted that I was only bantering them, and would not be answered in that way. Finally I said: "If I *must* play, I shall avail myself of the privilege you have already tendered me, and choose my own game, the *only* one

I can possibly play understandingly.” “Oh, certainly,—any game.” They could play most of the games then in vogue in a tolerable way. “Well, then, gentlemen, my game will be for each one to put up \$5 and form a *pool*, to be *cut for*, the highest card cut to take the pool.”

I found I had been betrayed into a position in which I must risk some money, or else, to a certain extent, place myself in an ignoble position. I preferred the former, intending at the same time not to lose more than fifty or a hundred dollars. But my proposal did not suit the party. They could “see no amusement in simply cutting a card.” I told them I thought as they did on that point, but as it was the only game I could manage to play at all, they must excuse me if I appeared to be a little arbitrary in my requirements. After some discussion, and they had found me determined to play *that game or none*, the general said: “Well, sir, I will play that game with you;” and he placed upon the table a pack of cards, then shuffled them, and when each had put up his \$5, he laid the pack upon the table, saying, “Here goes, then,” and made a cut. “But,” said I, “General, excuse me; I cannot concede to you the *first* cut.” I saw that the bottom card of those he held in his hand, ready to turn up and show, was slightly bent at the corner; and I said: “It strikes me that the fair way for both will be for a third person to shuffle the cards, and then we will make the first cut alternately.” “Oh, certainly; if I wished it so.” I said, “That is the way I play the game.” It was done, and we went on cutting, he winning oftener than myself. In a short time we had others to join us. I would win sometimes, but oftener failed of getting the pool. After we had been playing an hour, probably, I commenced winning frequently, our pool sometimes being as much as fifty or sixty dollars; and finally, when called to supper, about midnight, I had won a sum which turned out to be over \$600. While eating a good supper, and when the wine began to circulate freely, all seemed to forget their losses; doubtless expecting to win back what they had lost, and before I should leave the house, secure a portion of the profits they supposed I had made by my season of theatricals in Pittsburg.

That this especial object had been entertained by a certain few present that night, and that it was the principal motive of the invitation being extended to me, I had reason to believe even before I left the house of the general on that night; and many years after I received credible testimony to that effect from the gentleman whom I had accidentally selected to shuffle the cards, and who did not bet. In other words, to use an

expressive Western phrase, the object in view was to "skin me." As it turned out, the "skinnners" were "skinned!" For as soon as we had risen from the table I prepared to take my leave. "What, Mr. Ludlow, you are surely not going to leave us at this early hour?" "Must, indeed, gentlemen; it is now after one o'clock, and I am never out of bed after that hour, even on nights of my professional duties; and on other nights, seldom after ten or eleven o'clock. Besides, I told my wife I would not remain very late, but to *oblige you* I have broken my promise to her, and I cannot think of putting her usual good nature to any further test." Saying this, I bowed myself out. It is quite unnecessary, I presume, for me to say I was never after invited to the house of the general!

There may arise a suggestion in the minds of some people how it is I am able to give the precise language used at a period so remote as the above from the time I am writing it for this book. The mystery is solved when I tell such a person that in this, as in other like instances, I copy from records of my diaries, made at the time the incidents transpired, — diaries kept by me for more than fifty years. Before leaving the subject of this gambling party, I would wish to state to my reader that I have an utter detestation of *gambling* in all its phases. I never gambled but twice in the whole of my life, — I mean by betting largely on any chance-game. On the first occasion I lost all the money I had with me, — a few hundred dollars; the second occasion was the one just now referred to. On balancing my gambling account, I found I had won back my previous losses, with pretty good interest for the abstracted capital; and I made a resolve never to gamble again. I never have.

Before taking a final leave of my *friend*, the general, I desire to state that I was informed by the gentleman previously referred to, that in the progress of time certain visitors who were in the habit of joining the general's card-parties became poor and failed in business, while the general still to all appearances was prosperous, and kept up his custom of giving card-parties and suppers; and no one knew from whence the means came to support such hospitality except the initiated, who paid for their knowledge.

Towards the close of this season an incident occurred in my company that was the cause to me of considerable trouble and anxiety, and the source of much unhappiness to the parties who were the immediate subjects of it. I have previously mentioned that among my recruits of New York were the twin sisters, Misses Dunham, both novices. These young ladies had

been placed under the partial care of my wife and myself, they not being of age at the time. This charge was simply a request that we would look after and advise them; this we promised to do. On an evening about the 1st of November, one of the young ladies came to me in great consternation, and said that her sister, Emeline, had just then clandestinely married Mr. A. Wilton Jackson. Now Jackson, who had previously been a member of my Mobile company, I had no good opinion of. I thought him a man who would not be very scrupulous about the means he used to obtain the ends he desired to reach; that he would not be bound by any sense of love, justice, or honor, if either stood in the way of his obtaining his desires. I was told they had been married at the house of an ex-clergyman, who resided a short distance from where I was boarding, and that the man had been ejected from his church for some improper conduct. I called on this man; he admitted that he had just married such a couple as I described, and said that the lady claimed to be of age, and told him her father was dead and her mother residing in New York. This was true, excepting what regarded her age, for she lacked a few days of being eighteen years old. I hastened at once to the boarding-house of Jackson, whither I was informed they had gone at the conclusion of the marriage. I found them there, and after some sharp conversation she was submitted to my charge until the legality of the marriage could be ascertained. On this understanding she returned with me to my boarding-house. Two days after this arrangement, the case, by agreement, was placed before Judge Shaler (I think that was the name), who decided the marriage as *legal*. After his decision, the judge told me that in Pennsylvania, when persons were of marriageable years, it was only necessary for the contracting parties to declare their determinations of union before a third person competent to testify, and their marriage would be good and lawful. After this decision I had of course to surrender the bride.

Mr. and Mrs. Jackson remained in my company until the following spring, when they left me and went to New York. This marriage, like many other such unadvised ones, was "made in haste and repented of at leisure." They lived together as man and wife for some few years, and then separated. Not long after she obtained a divorce, and in a few years more each was married again. They are both dead now.

About this time an incident transpired in my family, not very interesting to the public, but which I crave permission to record here as one highly important to myself.

On the 6th of November, 1826, my wife presented me with our fourth child, a boy, who at this time is a thriving merchant in St. Louis. It is somewhat singular that of eight children born to me—five of whom reached maturity, and are still living—not one of them has ever evinced the slightest indication of a desire to adopt the stage as a profession.

About the 27th of November I took my departure from Pittsburg for the South, taking my company with me, on a boat built on a new plan, and a barge, commanded and principally owned by Capt. Robert Baldwin. This barge was an *experiment*; it was fitted up with the conveniences of a small steamer, and expressly and solely for *passengers*, of very light draught, and was *towed* by a small steamboat, which carried such freight as her size and the depth of the water in the Ohio River would permit. From some cause, to me unknown, it was not a success; nevertheless we had a very pleasant trip on this barge to Louisville, its point of destination. At Louisville we reëmbarked on a steamboat for New Orleans, at which place we arrived safely after a passage of ten days.

In New Orleans it was my lot to encounter one of those dreadful mental and physical shocks from which few parents of any sensibility are exempt in a prolonged life of matrimony. After having made arrangements for myself and company, on the day of my arrival in New Orleans, to depart for Mobile that evening, I accidentally met in the street a gentleman whom I recognized as a friend of Mr. William S. Harding, the gentleman to whom I confided my little boy in the spring of 1823, of which I have previously made mention. After exchanging civilities and inquiring after the health of Mr. Harding, I said, "When did you last visit Mr. Harding, and did you see my son?" The gentleman suddenly became very much affected, and with choking utterance replied, "My God! Mr. Ludlow, do you not know that *your son is dead*?" I was too much shocked to speak for some minutes. When I could do so I made further inquiries, and obtained the information that my son had died of lock-jaw from a cut of a finger, and had been buried then about three weeks. The letters of Mr. Harding had not reached me, having been sent to New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburg, and then to Mobile, where they reached me after my arrival in that city, such was the tedious movements of the mails in those days. Those who have lost children may probably understand my feelings under a blow like this, and under the peculiar circumstances with which it reached me. My first born—my beautiful boy—*dead*, and away from his parents!

I commenced my third season in Mobile on the 28th of December, 1826, with the same members that I had in Pittsburg, adding in Mobile Mr. and Mrs. Marks, of the former season; Mrs. Vos and daughter, the latter about fourteen years old (Mr. Vos had died during the past summer); Mr. John Wells, a useful actor, with me the previous season; also Mr. and Mrs. John Greene, of the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia. Mrs. Greene joined my company as leading lady in tragedy, and Mr. Greene to perform Irishmen and some old men. His Irish characters of the low order were uncommonly true to nature.

Mrs. Ball soon became a great favorite. She was pretty, and in comedy, particularly "romps," was very clever. She had an insinuating, coquettish manner that was quite taking with the audience, especially with the men, which she used effectually; sometimes too apparently, and in one instance, within my knowledge, rather unpleasantly.

During this season there came into the port of Mobile a certain vessel, strongly suspected of being piratical in character. She was commanded by a dashing, handsome Frenchman named R——d, a wild, devil-may-care young fellow, the very *beau ideal* of a "rover of the seas." This man attended the theatre almost every night for about two months, during which time he was waiting to stand his trial for *piracy*. He soon contrived to catch the eye of Mrs. Ball, when a system of ogling commenced, in sport on her part, but with a mischievous design on the part of this captain. He sought all kinds of ways to get acquainted with her, but nobody would introduce him to her. He would watch her from the theatre to her lodging almost every night, keeping at a short distance behind her; of course she was always attended by a male escort. He would loiter around the theatre of a morning while she was attending rehearsal, in hopes of getting an opportunity to speak to her. One day he tried a stratagem, that perhaps might have succeeded as he intended, had it not been for the discernment of Mrs. Ludlow. It was in this wise: My dwelling-house stood a short distance from the theatre, and somewhat removed from any other residence. Now, the captain had followed Mrs. Ball from the theatre, and saw her enter my gate; after which he threw himself upon the ground, and pretended to be ill. Not long after Mrs. Ball had entered my house, a colored girl was passing out at the gate; to her he motioned to come to him, and by signs, and with the few words of English that he could speak, caused her to suppose he was unwell, and wished to have some water. The girl re-

turned to the house immediately, and said to Mrs. Ludlow that "there was a sick gentleman at the gate, who wanted a drink of water." My wife hastened to the gate, followed by Mrs. Ball, when the latter at once recognized in the "sick gentleman" the persevering Captain R——d. As they approached him, my wife noticed that the expression of his eyes indicated almost any other feeling than that of pain. He addressed them in French, and as Mrs. Ball understood and could speak French, he related to them that he had been waylaid by two of the men of his own vessel, and by them had been knocked down and stunned by their blows; telling the story with such plausibility that the ladies were deceived for the moment, and induced to lead him into the house. My wife gave him a seat on the front gallery of the dwelling, and hastened to get him a glass of water; her motions were quick and rapid, and she returned just at the moment the captain had seized the hand of Mrs. Ball and was covering it with his kisses. This action at once caused Mrs. L. to think that some mischief was lurking under this appearance of illness; however, she gave him the water to drink, and he expressed himself as very grateful for her kindness. He then commenced telling Mrs. B. how the fellows came to assault him, and took occasion to say what "pain he was suffering," and in doing so put his hand upon his *heart*, and cast his eyes up at Mrs. B. in a most pitiable and languishing way, which expression did not escape the notice of Mrs. L. My wife was sometimes fond of practical jokes, but this one was not undertaken in a way that suited her ideas of propriety; so she desired Mrs. Ball to say to the captain, "as he now appeared better, though perhaps not quite well, — as there might be some little irregularity of the *heart*, for she noticed he had placed his hand upon it, — she thought it would be advisable for him to reach his hotel as soon as possible, where he could be quiet and have medical advice; and that she would send, if he desired it, for a hackney carriage to convey him thither." He replied that "madame was very kind, but he would not give her so much trouble." After some further remarks, which were not received as he expected, he bowed himself out, throwing love glances at Mrs. B. and looking daggers at Mrs. L. It is needless for me to say the ladies enjoyed this joke more than the captain did.

In April, 1827, Mr. Thomas A. Cooper played in Mobile an engagement of ten nights, appearing in his usual round of characters, viz.: *Macbeth*, *Virginus*, *Damon* (each of the last two characters twice), *Richard III.*, *Leon* ("Rule a

Wife," etc.), *Hamlet*, *Rolla*, (in "Pizarro"), *Beverly* ("Gamester"), with *Petruchio*. His engagement was a success.

During this season (1826-7) Mr. Mondelli painted scenery for two or three small melodramas, that proved attractive and brought me "paying houses;" in other words, they were a source of some profit, and I closed my season on the 20th of May, 1827, with compliments from the newspapers, and also from those citizens with whom I had the pleasure of speaking. While the members of the theatre were getting ready to leave the city for the summer, I went to New Orleans to make arrangements for the transportation of my company to Nashville, Tennessee, where I had engaged the theatre for a short time. I found in New Orleans the boat on which we had descended the Mississippi River the previous fall. This boat was commanded, and to a great extent owned, by Capt. J. H^{and}, a young man whose father and family resided at Pittsburg. He was particularly anxious to have me and my company go up the river on his boat; saying that although not going to Nashville with his boat, yet he would take us to the mouth of the Cumberland River on terms low enough to justify me in the expense and trouble of changing there to a smaller craft. He said he could not then name the terms, as we did not know what we might have to pay to get up the Cumberland River to Nashville. I concluded to go with him on those conditions, and so went back to Mobile to hurry on my company. We took leave of our Mobile friends in the most pleasant terms of reciprocal esteem, looking forward with pleasure to the fall, when we should meet again. In a few days we were all in New Orleans, and there I met on Canal Street, the "Boulevards" of the city, that persevering Capt. R——d. I supposed, at first, that he had come to New Orleans in pursuit of Mrs. Ball, but I understood before I left the city that his trial for piracy was pending in that city at the time, and it was supposed this was the immediate cause of his presence. I will only say in regard to him, finally, that on his trial there was not proof enough to convict him legally, yet a large majority of the people were satisfied that the charges against him had some foundation in fact. The captain by some means contrived to obtain an interview with Mrs. Ball; but no one knew what it amounted to, except that she did not go off with him, but went up the river on the same steamer with my theatrical company. We arrived at the mouth of the Cumberland River in about ten days from the time of our leaving New Orleans. There, to my great surprise, I was informed by Mrs. Ball that

*John
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she would leave my company at that point, and from there should proceed eastward, *via* Pittsburg. This information annoyed me at the first notice of it, inasmuch as I had relied on her to fill a certain line of characters, that I could not see how I should otherwise provide for. I remonstrated with her, and pointed out the injustice of her proceeding as regarded my interest, but all to no effect. She had "made up her mind to leave on that boat," and she did. The cause of this sudden change in her destination and her breach of faith to me I learned some time after from a young lady of my company, who had been admitted to the confidence of Mrs. Ball a short time prior to our reaching the mouth of the Cumberland. It appeared that our steamboat captain, J. H——, had entertained a secret passion for Mrs. Ball since the time we travelled with him from Louisville to New Orleans during the previous fall; and now, having got the lady all to himself, he improved the time to ingratiate himself into her good opinion. In short, a marriage was proposed and agreed to while on the boat, which was consummated on their arrival at Louisville, as I was told, and Mrs. B. became Mrs. H. I was also told that the parents of Capt. H—— were much displeased with the marriage, on account of the lady having been an *actress*, such was the stupid prejudice of those days, but after they had become acquainted with her she was highly esteemed and beloved by them. She made an excellent wife and mother, became an exemplary member of a church, and *of course* the *sin* of her having been an *actress* was atoned for.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Nashville Season—A New Theatre built—James H. Caldwell's erroneous Statement—Huntsville—A Building erected for a Theatre—Manager engages a "Dog Star"—The Dog of Montargis—A Dog's Memory and Revenge—Old Tom Talbot and Eli—Company leave for Tuscaloosa—Marriage of Mr. McClure and Miss Meek.

I COMMENCED my season in Nashville on the 10th of June, 1827, with a company nearly the same as that of the late Mobile season. The changes were Mrs. Ball, who left me as previously stated, and Mr. Mondelli, scenic artist, who left me at the close of the season and returned to New Orleans, where his family resided, and where he remained, pursuing his occupation as artist until his death, which occurred, I believe, in 1847. I cannot now recollect, nor have I any reminder, of the play and farce with which we opened this season. We had a very efficient comedy company, and therefore played mostly that branch of the Drama. A Mr. Joseph Page and his brother Solomon joined my company shortly after our opening. They came from the East,—Philadelphia, I believe. The former was a clever actor of old men, and especially best in Scotch dialect characters. He opened with us in *Nicol Jarvie* ("Rob Roy"), and his personation was a very creditable one.

During the summer of 1826, Mr. James H. Caldwell, with a view, I presume, of carrying out his policy of monopolizing all the towns of consequence in the West and South, bought a lot of ground in Nashville, and by borrowing money—some two thousand dollars—of its citizens, built a theatre, while his company performed in the "barn," and opened it to the public October 9, 1826, with the comedy of the "Soldier's Daughter" and the farce of "Turn Out;" *Frank Heartall*, Mr. James H. Caldwell; *Gov. Heartall*, Mr. J. Gray; *Timothy Quaint*, Mr. R. Russell, Sr.; *Widow Cheerly*, Mrs. R. Russell. In the farce: *Restive*, Mr. J. Gray; *Gregory*, Mr. R. Russell, Sr.

The money thus borrowed by Mr. Caldwell was to be returned at his convenience; the loaners to have season tickets, by way of interest, until the money borrowed should be refunded. This house was opened in a very unfinished condition, and was

never completed. I performed in it during the summer and fall of 1831, and it was then more like a *barn* than the one so styled, standing on Cherry Street. As for myself, I was contented with the *barn*, for the very sufficient reason that Mr. Caldwell had control of the new theatre, and it was part of his policy to keep me away from Nashville if he could.

During the summer of 1827, while I was with my company performing at Nashville and at Huntsville, Mr. Caldwell made an effort to secure and hold St. Louis, Missouri. According to a communication to Mr. Rees, and published by that gentleman in 1845, Mr. Caldwell is made to say: "In 1827 I leased a large vacant building in St. Louis for seven years, with privilege of purchase, and converted it into a theatre, adding a building fifty feet in the rear for a stage. This was the first regular theatre. I opened it on the 30th of June, 1827, with the 'Honeymoon' and 'Rosina.'" It is hard to say exactly what meaning may have been intended by the writer to be given to the word "regular;" but if it meant—and I can see no other meaning—a regularly organized company of comedians, the assertion is not true, in view of the facts. I took a *regular* company of comedians to St. Louis in 1819, and Mr. Samuel Drake, Sr., also took one in 1820. If the word "regular" meant to be applied solely to the *building*, still it was not true; for the building that I occupied on Main Street, between Olive and Locust Streets, eight years prior to Mr. Caldwell's time, was built *expressly* for a theatre, by a company of amateurs; and as to the construction or the elegance of the two, there was not much choice between them. The building that Mr. Caldwell found on the ground was a small and dilapidated one that had been used by Messrs. Scott & Rule as a temporary *warehouse* of minor importance, and stood on Second Street, west side, about one hundred feet north of Olive Street. To this old building Mr. Caldwell added, as he says, "fifty feet for a stage." It was a melancholy structure altogether, to say the best of it. My season in Nashville was short, for it was not profitable. Nothing interesting transpired, and we closed on the 26th of August, and went to Huntsville, Alabama, where we opened on the 4th September. In Huntsville I occupied the theatre that had originally been intended for me, which was erected in 1825, and of which I had been deprived in that year by the treachery of Alexander M. Wilson. It was a small, very rude, and unfinished building. Mr. Caldwell, after having obtained the theatre through the agency of Wilson, performed in it with his company but for one season only; for, finding it unprofitable to him, he abandoned

the building, and it was sold at public auction a short time after, to pay contractors' claims that had been hanging over it since the period of its erection. I rented this theatre only by the week, and on very moderate terms; but it did not pay even then, and it has not, as I understand, ever been a paying house at any time since my season in it.

I have long considered it a fortunate event for me that Wilson's knavery stepped in and saved me from the involvements of a lease on the theatre of that town. It is one among many interpositions of Providence that have saved me from carrying out my intentions, the failure of which I thought at the time a great misfortune, but which proved a blessing instead.

Many of my company with myself took up our sojourn with my old friend Mr. Irby Jones, with whom I stopped in the summer of 1824. I found him the same genial, good-hearted, jolly landlord as of former days; and if any of his family be alive, and this book should ever meet their sight, I beg them to accept my kindest regards, as a tribute to the memory of an esteemed friend.

I now beg permission to introduce to my readers an humble friend, whose acquaintance I made in this town, and one whom I regarded with no ordinary affection till the day of his death. It is a *dog*, — a half-breed Newfoundland and French poodle. This dog could do almost any thing except talk; but he appeared to understand the English language, and could be guided by words better than some members of my company.

He *was* a member of my company for many years, and contributed as much to my success, whenever he performed, as any individual in it. I became acquainted with him after this manner: For two or three mornings, while sitting at the door of the hotel at which I was stopping, I noticed this dog passing and carrying in his mouth a satchel or umbrella, or something supposed to belong to his master, a well-dressed young man, who, I was told, was a "genteel gambler." There was a peculiar intelligence in the dog's eyes that attracted my attention. While sitting, as before, in front of the door, I saw this man coming towards me, the dog following him, and I requested Mr. Jones, my landlord, who said he knew the man, to introduce me to him; he did so, and we conversed a few minutes, when I spoke of the dog, and said how much I was pleased with his appearance. The man was fluent in his description of the animal's qualities; and said that, among other acquirements, the dog had learned to understand the English, French, and Spanish languages; and that although he could not speak, he comprehended them readily. "Of

this," he said, "I'll convince you." So, calling the attention of the dog, he motioned for him to go back the way he had come, saying at the same time in French, "*Apportez moi mes gants*" ("Bring my gloves"). The dog looked him in the face for an instant, as though waiting to know whether he had any further orders to give, then trotted back briskly, and soon returned with the gloves. I said, "I should like to own that dog; I would make an *actor* of him." At this the man looked pleased, and said he "would like to see Nero on the stage." "Well," I said, "you shall do so, provided you will agree to let me retain him as my property, for a fair consideration, after I have instructed him." He studied a moment, and then said, "How much will you give me for him in such case?" To which I replied, "How much will you take for him, then?" "One hundred dollars," he said. "No, I'll give you fifty, if the dog answers my purpose, and I'll determine that in one week." He hesitated, but at last said, "Give me, in addition, a season-ticket for the time you are in Huntsville, and you shall have him." To this I agreed, and Mr. Jones witnessed the agreement. We appointed an hour, and he joined me at the theatre, and Nero was introduced on the "stage." I tried him in one or two things that he would have to do in a play in which I proposed to bring him before the public, and these I found not difficult to teach him; indeed, he learned the business of his part more readily than some human beings it had been my lot to instruct. In about a fortnight the piece was ready to be produced; it was called the "*Dog of Montargis*," and is an interesting melodrama, founded, it is said, on facts occurring about the middle of the seventeenth century, and connected with the life and adventures of two officers of the French army.

I produced the play with new scenery, and in a style that had never before been seen in Huntsville; it became quite attractive, and Nero was the "star" of the occasion. His late owner attended the performance each evening. I watched the effect on him. On the first night he could hardly sit still, he was so delighted, and when Nero got round after round of applause, he fairly *danced* with joy! Before I left Huntsville this man told me he had been offered \$500 for the dog, provided I would surrender him.

At the risk of being considered too *dog-matical*, I shall venture to record what I consider a remarkable instance of *mental faculty* in an animal generally considered by men as not possessing any such quality. This case will show, I think, that in one instance, at least, there was mind enough in a brute to

retain a memory of wrongs, and a spirit of determination to have revenge for those wrongs, quite consistent with man's boasted superiority. Mr. Watson, the gentleman who played the character of *Col. Macaire*, in the drama of the "Dog of Montargis," one night, during the performance of that piece, happened to fail making his entrance on the stage at the proper time; in his haste to get from the "green-room" (sitting-room) to the stage, in a dark spot he stumbled upon the body of Nero stretched upon the floor. In his vexation he kicked the dog, after stumbling over him. Nero did not attempt to bite him, nor to make any demonstration of resentment except a short, low growl; but he did not forget it. In the last scene in the drama, the dog is supposed to recognize in *Macaire* the murderer of his master, *Capt. Aubrey*, and it is his business to spring at *Macaire*, to clutch him by the throat, and strangle him to death. The dog I had trained to do it in this way. After having made the spring at the *Colonel's* throat, the latter usually aided him by holding out with one hand the double of a black silk cravat, representing a stock for the neck, which the dog was to seize and hold with his teeth. This was so managed that the audience could not see how it was done, and it presented the appearance of the dog having his teeth in the *Colonel's* throat. It had been frequently played without any variation from this way, but on the evening that Mr. Watson kicked the dog, his manner showed an evident dislike of that gentleman; and in the last scene, as soon as Nero saw the *Colonel* he made a jump at him, and without waiting for Mr. Watson's aid, took him by the *throat indeed*, and getting the *single* turn of the cravat in his teeth, which made it like a slip-knot, commenced growling, and drawing it tighter and tighter; so that Mr. Watson was compelled to call to the prompter to ring down the curtain for *the dog was choking him!* The newspapers of the next day said that "the death-scene had never been so well played;" but Mr. Watson entertained a very different opinion. This unusual performance on the part of Nero may have been merely the effect of accident, but it had very much the appearance of design; and one fact was very evident, he appeared ever after to dislike Mr. Watson. This was so apparent that, to protect himself against too much *reality*, that gentleman made it a point from that time forward to seize the dog by the ears, and in the struggle hold his head so that the strain upon the handkerchief did not bear too tight on his throat. Nero's fierceness in the last scene of this play was something frightful; there was something about it quite startling to an un-

accustomed spectator. Nero was a "star" of the first magnitude in his line, and as well known in the West and South, in his day, as any star that traversed those portions of a theatrical hemisphere; he was literally a *dog-star*. Towards the close of his life, when he was suffering greatly with a disease in his head, — a disease that finally killed him, — he would, while in the theatre at night, lie under a table, or any out-of-the-way place, until he was called to go upon the stage; and when through with his scene, would come off, and having lain down, panting from exertion, would throw his front feet over his head, showing plainly the pain he was in. These evident signs of suffering became so painful to me and others that I finally put him entirely on the sick-list, and had him carefully watched and nursed until he died. Poor Nero! my heart was heavy as I put him in his grave, where I saw him decently inearthed in my garden, and a memorial placed to mark the spot where my faithful dog was laid.

The first half of my season in Huntsville was a losing operation; the concluding half was better, and about made up the losses of the former. The only changes in my company here were the accession of a young man, a novice, named Thomas Talbot, and that caused by the death of Stephen D. Wheeler, musician; the latter a good flute-player, and a gentleman in his manners. He died on the 14th of October, and was buried on the 16th, the theatre being closed on that night. Young Talbot was the son of an innkeeper, who had long officiated in that capacity in Nashville. His son Thomas became "stage-struck," and like many young men who, because they are pleased with what they see going forward on the "boards" of a theatre, fancy that they can do as well, or better, and try it, but to find themselves at last sadly mistaken. After having made the step, and failed to establish a footing, they are ashamed to return and take to some other business better suited to their capacities; and so drag on through a life of inutility, when otherwise they might have been efficient and valuable members of society.

I cannot take leave of old Talbot and his inn without relating an anecdote connected with him, well known to most of the old residents of Nashville. "Old Tom Talbot" (the original "Old Tom") was said to be the laziest man in Tennessee. He was over six feet in height, very corpulent, and very fond of sleeping; a good-natured, easy-going old fellow, of the *Rip Van Winkle* order, without, I believe, the same desire for liquor. The eldest son of the old man was named Eli, whom I remember as a very intelligent and highly re-

spected citizen of Nashville. Eli, at the time I am about to speak of, was a lad of fourteen or fifteen years of age, and the old man's principal assistant,—a kind of factotum. One frosty morning the old man awoke about sunrise, and called to his son, "E-li-i?" (drawling the word lazily) "E-li-i?" "What do you want, father?" replied Eli. "E-li-i, have you a good fire in the stove?" "Yes, father." "E-li-i, have you fed the hogs?" "Yes, father." "E-li-i, have you fed the horses?" "Yes, father." "Well, E-li-i, they say the house is on fire; I wish you would make some arrangements for putting it out."

I closed my season in Huntsville on the 18th of October, 1827, having performed there six weeks, and left with regret many warm friends, that I have never seen since. We were compelled to hire land-conveyances to reach Tuscaloosa, my next stopping-place, and we were about four days getting there. I commenced my season on the 1st of November, in a ball-room belonging to a Frenchman named, I believe, Pay-san, who kept a confectionary in the front part of the building. My old friends of 1825 appeared glad to see me again, and the season passed along pleasantly. On the 7th of December, 1827, George Francis McClure (*alias* Staunton), and Miss Mary Ann Meek, both members of my company, were at Tuscaloosa joined in the holy bands of wedlock, and the two became one.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Company leave for Montgomery — Comical Adventures — Ned Caldwell — “Scipio Africanus” — A Lame Horse — A Dream Verified — A Mystery Explained — A Primitive Theatre — “Such a Getting Up-stairs” — First Performance by a Regular Company in Montgomery — Company leave for Mobile — Season commences January 16 — Closes May 13 — The Manager leaves for New York by way of Western States — Steamer Hibernia — Capt. Jackson — Visits Old Manager, Drake — Stops at Cincinnati — Pittsburg — Takes Stage for Sandusky — Capt. Day — A Rough Journey — Stage Breaks Down — Carrying a Rail — Canal-boat to Albany — Steamer to New York.

ABOUT the 10th of December we started for Montgomery, Alabama, then a small town of about fifteen hundred inhabitants, situated on the Alabama River, near the head of navigation. It has since become a city of considerable importance. I was induced to visit this town by a gentleman who assured me we would be well supported there in proportion to the limited population; but as he was landlord of the principal hotel, and had the only room large enough for us to perform in, I had some misgivings as to the beneficial result, knowing that a man's interest will sometimes warp his judgment. However, the Black Warrior River was not at that particular time in good boating condition, and there was no boat then at Tuscaloosa ready to depart for Mobile; therefore I concluded to go to Montgomery, where the chances of getting to Mobile, *via* the Alabama River, were more frequent, and at the same time ascertain what the town might be able to do in the way of theatricals, having an eye to a future and more lengthened season than I could now make in that town. To accomplish this journey to Montgomery we were obliged to hire land-conveyances, such as a heavy road-wagon with two horses, light wagons and saddle-horses. The journey, if I remember rightly, occupied three days, and was rather a rough one; yet not without some fun attached to it, in the minds of young and adventurous persons. As an instance of this kind I will relate an occurrence that took place on the evening of our second day's journey. We halted about sundown of this day at a residence on the roadside, consisting of two or three log-cabins, surrounded by cotton-fields, everything having the appearance of a well-to-do farming homestead. We asked if we could obtain “entertainment” there

for the night, — meaning supper and beds for ourselves, and stabling and feed for our horses; to our question the reply was, we could. The owner of the house — who was the man we addressed — was a tall, huge-proportioned man, with a good-natured face; and his wife — whom we saw as we entered — was as tall in proportion, for a woman, as he was for a man. This tall pair were comfortably clad in home-made linsey-woolsey; and Ned Caldwell, who was always ready with some apt quotation, eyeing them from head to foot, whispered in my ear, “There were giants in those days.” We observed here and there, dodging around, five or six children, and as many black ones of different sizes and ages, and all staring at the odd cavalcade entering the doors of the log cottages, quite as strange-looking to them as they were to us. An immediate onslaught was commenced upon the chickens, and negroes were dispatched to the barn and out-houses in search of eggs; in short, a general stir commenced at once to provide supper for a small army of hungry people. In the meantime there was a general washing and cleaning away of the dust of the road, preparatory to our evening meal. It was a tedious time ere supper was ready, but when it came it was abundant and substantial, consisting of sundry dishes of chicken fried in cream, eggs and ham at one end of the table and ham and eggs at the other, — no great variety, but all good; added to which were hot biscuit, fresh from the oven, delicious, sweet butter, and coffee that was a nosegay of most delicate flavor, especially to hungry people. All being seated at the table, the landlady took her position at a side-table and served out the coffee. As I was being seated, I discovered one of my company, Mr. “Ned” Caldwell, at the opposite end of the table, with his hair standing up like porcupine quills; his shirt-collar unbuttoned and spread back, and his eyes in “fine frenzy rolling,” surveying the scene around him. On each side of and a little way behind him were two young negro boys, one about eight, the other about twelve years of age; behind my chair were, in like manner, two somewhat younger than the others. These four had each a *torch* of “light-wood,” to speak the vernacular of that country, or as I would say, pitch-pine knots; and these being lighted, cast a wild and weird appearance upon the faces and objects around.

Perhaps I should explain here that the using of these torch-lights was in consequence of these people not having just then any candles at their command. Caldwell, who had taken two or three extra drinks of whiskey, of some he had brought with him, was just in the humor to imagine himself some great

potentate, surrounded by his court, at a banquet. The first remark that he made was: "This likes me well! This is feasting in the Oriental, the Eastern style,—Tippoo Sahib with his retainers on a foraging excursion." At the same moment his eye rested on the largest negro boy, who stood near him, and who was clad in the most primitive kind of costume, namely, a cotton shirt scarcely long enough to be decent, over which was a coarse woollen jacket, and this was all. Caldwell surveyed him from head to foot, then said in a pompous, tragic manner, "Friend, what is thy name?" To which the negro replied, "Sip, massa." "Sip," repeated Caldwell, "meaning Scipio?" The darkey smiled and nodded, yes. "Surnamed Africanus?" The boy nodded again. "Scipio Africanus, stand further from the presence; [with his hand waving him back] for, to say the truth, I like not the contiguity nor the superfluity of the perfume of thy epidermis; it partakes not of the 'Sabeian odors from the spicy shores of Araby the blest;' [then drawing his chair nearer the table] nevertheless, [quoting from "King Lear"] 'I retain you as one of my hundred!' But I do not like the fashion of your garments; you will say they are Persian attire,—let them be changed!" During this harangue the company generally had paused and put on serious faces, in order to humor the joke. The landlord and his wife stared in wonderment, and the darkeys tried to smile, but looked frightened rather than amused. Supper was soon over, and all retired for the night to such accommodations as the family could afford them. These were rough, but clean; and, being tired, all slept soundly. I arranged overnight with our host to let us have breakfast by the time the sun rose the next day. At the time appointed it was ready, and so were we, and all sat down to a substantial breakfast, similar to the meal of the previous night. Before getting breakfast, Ned Caldwell had discovered that his horse was lame, or rather the horse he had hired at Tuscaloosa, and which was to be sent back with the return of the teamster of the baggage-wagon that I had hired. This discovery was annoying Caldwell very much, and he had been talking with our host about hiring a horse from him to perform the remainder of the journey, leaving his lame horse with him, to be exchanged on the return of the wagoner; and the fresh animal's hire was to be paid in advance. Noticing that I seemed to be the head of the party, the man came to me to ask what he had best do; saying he would be willing to let the gentleman have the horse, and had partly promised him he would, but that one of the friends of the gentleman (pointing to Sam

Jones, one of my company, who was then walking at a short distance) had just then told him he must not regard what that man (meaning Caldwell) said, for he was a little *deranged*; and that he (Jones) was taking him on to the insane asylum at Philadelphia; that he had fallen in with this company on the road, and purposed to continue with them as far as Montgomery, after which he should proceed alone with him. I saw at once that there was some joke on foot among the young men, which they were playing off on Ned Caldwell. Our host was a kind-hearted man, and said: "I would let the poor gentleman have the horse, but his friend told me that I must positively refuse to let the horse go; that the lameness complained of was only temporary; that the horse would frequently limp after standing all night; but once on the road, in a little while the lameness would disappear, and he would get along as well as usual." While we were talking, Caldwell stepped up to get a final answer from our host, and I went to the stable to learn what was the real difficulty, should there be any at all. Jones, seeing me go towards the stable, followed; and when there I said, "Jones, what is the matter with Caldwell's horse?" He burst into a hearty laugh, and replied, "Nothing is the matter with him." "Well," I said, "what is the matter with Ned?" "O, nothing; it is only a joke we are playing off on him, to pay him for some of his own; you know he is addicted to practical joking. The fact is, while we were dressing this morning he said, 'I'll bet ten dollars my horse is lame, for I dreamed last night he was.' We all laughed at him." And Jones continued, "I went out quickly to the stable, and hunting round, found a thorn from a locust tree, which I stuck into one of the hind feet of his horse, but in such a way that I could easily pull it out again, leaving the horse without any real injury, but causing him to limp while it was there, as soon as he pressed his foot to the ground. I had not been out of the stable many minutes when Caldwell came to the house and said, 'Now, what do you think of *dreams*? I told you I should find my horse *lame*, and he is lame.' " Having heard Jones's explanation, I returned to the house, he having promised me he would immediately pull the thorn from the horse's foot. I found Caldwell fretting and fuming, and angrily censuring our host for making a promise to him and then breaking it; to which the other returned no reply, but walked away, looking at Ned pitifully, and pointing to his own forehead, nodded to me, as much as to say, "Poor fellow! mad as a March hare!" As I then understood the real state of the affair, I finally succeeded in persuading Caldwell to have his horse

brought out, telling him it was probably only a little stiffness, that would be removed by exercise; to which he replied, he supposed there was no other way left for him, and as we had but one short day's journey then to make, if the horse continued lame he would get off his back and lead him the remainder of the journey. We were soon ready to start, and in the meantime I had talked with our landlord,—but saying nothing in regard to Caldwell,—giving him my name and telling him I was going to Montgomery to open a theatre there, and should he visit that town within the next two weeks he would probably find me at the principal hotel. He said he had some law business to attend to in Montgomery in a few days, and he thought we might meet again there. And so away we started, Ned on his supposed lame horse, that now hardly limped at all; our host standing in the door, looking at Ned and then at me, and pointing to his forehead, as though saying, “Poor fellow! mad! mad!”

We reached Montgomery about sundown of that day,—Caldwell's horse not in the least lame after the first half-mile of travel; but this lameness was a mystery to Caldwell until one night about a week after our opening at Montgomery, when, our evening's entertainment being over, three or four of the performers, with myself, were passing through the bar-room of the hotel, when suddenly I came in contact with my tall host of the road, who had come, as he had previously said he would. He seemed glad to see me, and said he had been present at the evening's performance, and had been very much amused. After a few minutes' conversation, he said: “What became of the crazy man that was travelling with you? Do you know, I saw a man that *showed* with you to-night who reminded me of him? I never saw two men more alike. I would be glad to see that man, just to ask him if he hasn't a crazy brother.” “Well,” I said, “you can do that; here he stands behind you.” With this I called Caldwell to me, and said: “Here is our host with whom we stayed the night before we reached Montgomery.” “Oh, yes,” said Ned; “this is the man that first would, and then he wouldn't?” The tall man stared, and seemed dumbfounded, but at last said: “Why! you are not the crazy man, are you?” “Crazy? d—n no! what put that into your head?” Just then Jones, who was standing at my elbow, made a start to go away; but I caught him by the coat-tail, held him, and compelled him to reveal the whole hoax he had passed upon Ned. We all had a hearty laugh, and Jones only got off by paying for a game supper for the party of four.

The room that we performed in at Montgomery was, perhaps, the most inconvenient place that ever the descendants of Thespis had to encounter. It was in the upper story of a very large, roughly built frame house, that was called a "hotel;" the garret, or topmost portion of which had been fitted up by some amateurs to perform plays in. The only way of reaching this attic temple of the muses, for either actors or audience, was by a flight of rough stairs on the *outside* of the building, and these seemed almost interminable; then, when you had reached the top of them, you had to make your entrance through a *window*, so low that a person of ordinary height had to stoop to get into the room. This room was fitted up with rough seats without any covering, and all on a dead level. There were no dressing-rooms contiguous to the stage; therefore the performers were compelled to dress in their own rooms of the stories below, and, wrapped in cloaks, thread their way among the audience to the stage. If a change of dress was required during the progress of a play, it had to be done behind a temporary screen across one corner of the room, and behind the back scene. I was told the room had been fitted up for some amateur actors of the town; of these the principal ones were a Mr. G——, a lawyer, and two schoolmasters, a Mr. V——s and a Mr. B——k. The first-named gentleman afterwards became a judge, and subsequently to that a United States senator. I believe all three are now dead.

Our season consisted of only two weeks, for the town did not pay; and those two weeks were the *first performances* by a *regular dramatic company in Montgomery*. I am told that town has now a very well arranged theatre, a largely increased population, and in years not long past, supported the Drama very well.

About the 1st of January we started for Mobile, and arrived at that city in four or five days, being delayed in our trip by stopping at many points for bales of cotton. Owing to some improvements not being completed in the theatre, I did not commence this Mobile season until the 16th of January, 1828, my company consisting of N. M. Ludlow, manager and actor; John Greene, J. E. Watson, A. J. Marks, Charles F. McClure, H. N. Barry, Samuel P. Jones, Edwin A. Caldwell, William A. Kidd, William L. Riddle, Edward S. Duncan, Thomas Talbot, Mrs. John Greene, Mrs. N. M. Ludlow, Mrs. McClure (late Meek), Miss Almira Dunham, Mrs. George Rowe, Mrs. Vos, and Miss Mary Vos; leader of orchestra, Henry Heidmann; prompter, Mr. George Rowe. Of these,

Mr. Greene played Irishmen and testy old men ; Mr. Marks, the broad comic old man and some peculiar low-comedy, with French characters ; Mr. Riddle, sedate old men ; Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Jones, and Mr. McClure divided among them the different kinds of young men ; the others, whatever cast for, without regard to line of business. The leading tragedy, comedy, and melodrama, was undertaken this season by myself. Of the first I did not enact many characters. I remember doing the *Stranger*, in the play of that name, Mrs. Greene performing *Mrs. Haller*, *Macbeth* to her *Lady Macbeth*, and *Virginius* to Mrs. McClure as *Virginia*. I never assumed to be a tragedian, but from necessity I was sometimes compelled to play leading tragedy. Mrs. McClure performed the leading juvenile business ; Mrs. Rowe, the leading old women ; Mrs. Ludlow, soubrettes, and certain ones of the line of old women ; Miss Dunham, the interesting young ladies ; and Mrs. Vos, second old women and utility.

The melodrama of the "Dog of Montargis" was often performed this season, and my good dog Nero never failed to draw a full house.

I do not recollect any thing that would be likely to prove interesting to the general reader which transpired during the season of 1828 in Mobile. It was tolerably good, as far as compensation went ; and it was closed, I believe, with satisfaction as regarded the plays performed and the company performing them, on the 13th of May, 1828.

I concluded to visit New York again the ensuing summer, as I wished to make a change in the organization of my company, that I might afford the citizens of Mobile an opportunity of viewing new faces. To this I was further induced by the fact that Mr. James H. Caldwell had taken possession, managerially, of St. Louis during the summer previous, of which I have spoken in a former chapter. As for Nashville, Huntsville, etc., my experience of the past summer had presented no inducement for further experiments in those towns. I had been induced, from circumstances of which I shall speak more fully hereafter, to look into the condition of theatricals at other points in the West supposed to be open, to which I might in the future go with my company for the summer, when my Mobile winter season had terminated.

My wife not being in a condition to undergo with safety the fatigues of a journey through the Western country, embarked about the middle of May for New York by sea, accompanied by Miss Dunham and Mr. and Mrs. McClure, and in a few days after I started for the East, *via* New Orleans and the Mis-

Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. At New Orleans I took a passage for Louisville on a steamer called the *Hibernia*, commanded by my Irish friend, Capt. Jackson, of keel-boat notoriety, and a delightful trip we had of it. The boat was sumptuously provided with every thing necessary for the comfort of the passengers, and Capt. Jackson was the same jovial, pleasant gentleman I had ever found him. One would not have supposed he had ever been a keel-boatman, his manners being much more polished than were those of that class generally, who, though honest, honorable, blunt men, had very little, if any, of the *suaviter in modo*. There were two wedding-parties on the boat on their return home to the West, and altogether I had the most pleasant trip I ever had on a steamboat. On arriving at Louisville, I learned that my old manager, Samuel Drake, Sr., still retained his circuit of theatres, embracing Louisville, Frankfort, and Lexington. On arriving at Cincinnati, I found the Columbia Street Theatre unoccupied, and for rent to any one who would take it; but so far no one had been found with temerity enough to venture upon it.

My next point of stopping was at Pittsburg, where I found the theatre and theatrical people about the same as when I left them two years before; if any change were visible, it was that the old building looked in a worse state of dilapidation than ever. At this point of my journey I changed my route for the remainder of it, and instead of crossing the Alleghany Mountains, concluded to go by the way of Lake Erie, Buffalo, and the New York Western Canal, being principally induced to this by my friend and recent travelling companion, old Capt. Day, father of the later Capt. James L. Day. These two gentlemen were the founders of the steamer mail line, for many years highly popular, running between New Orleans and Mobile. Old Capt. Day was a very pleasant travelling companion; he was not a very talkative man, but when he did speak, his words were sure to be directly to the point, and often tipped with a deal of sarcastic humor. We took a stage-coach passage from Pittsburg for Sandusky, a town situated on the shore of Lake Erie with rather a crowded coach at starting, but diminishing in numbers as we advanced, until the captain, myself, and one other man, a clergyman, were the only passengers. The road to Sandusky was, most of the way, over what was called in that country "corduroy;" that is, round logs of wood of about ten or twelve feet in length, taken from the contiguous woods, the limbs lopped off, and in this rough condition laid crosswise on the road. A great portion of the way, in a distance, I believe, of

over a hundred miles, this road had been made through low lands, that at times were subject to overflows from Lake Erie.

Now, the reader may readily suppose that riding in a stage-coach over this road was not one of the most desirable methods of travel ; however, we were in for it, and had to get over it in the best way we could. The night that followed our leaving Pittsburg was stormy and dark, and it commenced raining about ten o'clock, so fast that the driver said he could not proceed, but must stop till daylight came again ; so we put up for the night at a roadside inn. About daylight we were on the road once more, which we found very muddy and very slippery.

About ten miles from where we stopped for the night, we were compelled to cross a rude bridge, one side of which was considerably lower than the other, having sunk by the washing away of the earth that had sustained the cross-timber on which that end of the bridge planks were laid. Without saying a word to the passengers, the driver made a dash to cross the sideling bridge. As soon as the front wheels struck the bridge, the coach commenced sliding sidewise down the planks, coming in contact with a long heavy timber that had been put on the ends of the planks to keep them in their places, shoved this piece of timber off the bridge at one end, and following it in movement, the coach was turned over on one side, the long piece of timber supporting it, one end of it having struck the bank of the stream below, while the other still rested on the bridge above ; the wheels of the coach on one side resting flatwise on the bridge, the body being miraculously supported by the long and strong timber that had thus been displaced. The three passengers — Capt. Day, the clergyman, and I — clung to the upper posts of the coach, and thus saved ourselves from being plunged into the water below us. Fortunately the bank was not over ten or twelve feet in height, and the horses had reached the further side, dragging the coach on its side to a jam tight between the fallen timber and the bridge ; at which moment the driver sprang from his seat and held the horses until the passengers extricated themselves. As soon as we had reached the platform of the bridge above us, we commenced getting the horses freed from the carriage, and finally succeeded, with the aid of some men who were passing that way, in getting the coach upon the bank. To our great satisfaction, we found that neither men nor horses were in any way injured, nor was the carriage or harness. As soon as the driver could get the horses attached to the coach, we made

another start ; and having a piece of road for a mile or two that was *not* "corduroyed," as he stated, we got into the coach to ride, and the man started his horses on a trot for the first time since leaving the bridge. Just when we were congratulating ourselves on having got over the worst portion of our road, suddenly we heard a crash, and the coach stopped with a jerk. The driver got down, looking for the difficulty, found he had passed over a stump that stood in the middle of a clear, level piece of road, and had struck the stump, and in this way broke the axle-tree close to the hub of one of the front wheels. This was a truly serious matter, for I saw plainly that no more riding could be done ; and, according to the driver's statement, we were many miles from any human habitation. However, we resolved to make the best we could of it, so went to work with the driver to get up a contrivance by means of which to support the axle-tree on a rail ; and in this way, moving on three wheels, we supposed we might possibly get on. We once more started, and for three or four hours moved along at a slow pace, occasionally having to stop, and with a rail borrowed from a neighboring fence, lift the coach out of the mud-holes of the road. This necessity occurred every half-mile or so, when, finding some difficulty in getting a rail when needed, I concluded, on procuring a good one, to *carry it* on my shoulder as I walked along, for riding was out of the question. This happened to be the case towards sundown, when the coach, having got ahead, stopped at a house, which proved to be that of one of the owners of the line of stages ; and when I came up with the coach I pitched the rail off my shoulder to the ground and drew a long breath. The man noticing me, said, "You seem fatigued, sir?" I replied, "Yes, somewhat ; and that I didn't mind paying my money to ride, and then being compelled to walk, but I thought it rather hard to be required to carry a rail besides." This appeared to be a capital joke to the man, for he laughed immoderately ; but I couldn't see where the fun was. It was not long after that I saw the circumstance mentioned in a New York paper as a Western eccentricity. We were informed by the stage proprietor that the coach could proceed no further ; but he would furnish each passenger with a horse, on which he could perform the remainder of the journey to Sandusky. In a short time we were each mounted on a stage horse, of the team that had brought the coach from the previous night's station. I found myself seated on a raw-boned nag, astride a wagon-saddle, with a common stage harness bridle in my hand, so short in the reins as to compel me to incline forward

in order to hold it. Capt. Day, the parson, and the driver were similarly mounted; and away we started, as the evening shades were gathering around us, for a ride of fifteen or twenty miles.

We had not proceeded half the way when we found we were riding through water, which deepened as we proceeded, until it reached the horses' knees. There was no moon visible, and the thick woods obscured the star-light; so that we were riding in water, without being able to see much beyond our horses' heads. I became uneasy, and inquired occasionally of the driver, who led the way, whether he did not apprehend that we might, by mistake, ride into Lake Erie, without being aware of it until we were swimming. He laughed, and told me not to be uneasy; that he knew the road very well, and had often driven his horses, of a dark night, through the overflow of the lake, and had "never met with an accident but once, and that wasn't much of an accident." Being a little curious, I inquired how that happened. "Well," he said, "it was a cloudy night, no moon nor stars, and it was raining very hard. Something frightened the horses, and they jumped suddenly on one side, and before I could hold them up, sprung forward and dragged the whole *concern* into a deep pond, where the horses came near being drowned; but I cut them loose, and they *swam* out. The passengers got on the roof of the coach and came out safe, except one, but he was only a *nigger*; the d—d fool didn't know how to swim." "And was he drowned?" I asked. "Oh yes! He was *setting* on the seat with me, and as the horses jumped into the pond, he *sprung* off into the water, and that was the last I saw of him; but I *heard* they found his body afterwards."

We were moving along at a very slow pace while he was relating this *small* accident; we could not go out of a walk, and even then the horses were splashing the water over us, so that when we reached Sandusky, which was about midnight, the lower portions of our garments were completely saturated with water. At Sandusky we were told that a steamer from Buffalo was expected there in the course of the forenoon of the coming day, on its way up the lake to Detroit, from which place it would return without delay, and would be the first on which we could embark for our destined port of Buffalo. So we had to make ourselves as comfortable as possible with that wearisome prospect. After breakfast of the day following our arrival at Sandusky, while I was standing in the door of the hotel, an Indian rode up, having before him, across his pony, a very small and beautiful fawn. I was much pleased with

its innocence and beauty, and inquired whether he wished to sell it. He *grunted* out "Yow!" — meaning "Yes." "How much for it?" "Dowler" "One dollar, eh?" "Yow!" I bought it as a birthday present for my daughter, who had just then reached her seventh birthday. I speak of this incident of the fawn because there is "a little story" connected with it that may perhaps interest some of the readers of this book. This fawn cost me considerable care and trouble to get it to New York. My dear daughter was delighted with it, but it soon became a troublesome and somewhat costly pet, for it had a fancy for gnawing furniture and breaking crockery, and my wife wished me to part with it; so, altogether against my own and my child's inclinations, after suffering from its pranks for five months, I gave it to my friend Thomas A. Cooper, the great tragedian, as a present for his daughter Priscilla, now Mrs. Robert Tyler, and daughter-in-law to ex-President Tyler. Mr. Cooper had at that time a pleasant residence at Bristol, on the Delaware River, about twenty miles from Philadelphia. Although Mr. Cooper had a large space for this fawn to roam in, yet it would jump the fence and get into his neighbors' gardens, doing considerable mischief in them. Once it spiked itself trying to jump an iron railing, but with careful nursing the wound healed; still, nothing could cure her of the propensity for rambling, and finally Mr. Cooper made her a present to Joseph Bonaparte, the ex-king of Spain, who had a park of deer adjoining his residence at Bordentown. This gentleman, when he returned to France, I was told, took this deer with him, — the only one of his herd that had that honor bestowed upon it.

But to return to my narrative. About noon of the day following my arrival at Sandusky, the steamer from Buffalo came along, and we embarked, finding it would cost us no more to proceed on up the lake to Detroit than it would to wait at Sandusky till its return. On arriving at Detroit I found myself very ill in health, — the effect of my previous night's ride over the inundated road, — so I went on shore and consulted a physician, who told me I had taken a very severe cold, and that without great care the attack might prove fatal; for, as he said, I had symptoms of pleurisy. He prescribed for me and I engaged a room at a hotel, expecting to be detained there for an indefinite time. The boat was to leave the evening of the day following her arrival, so I gave up the expectation of leaving on her, took to my bed, and my new acquaintance, the clergyman, like a good Samaritan, came and sat in my room, appearing to take as much interest in my situation as he could

have done had I been a long known and esteemed friend. I regret to say that at this moment I cannot recall his name; but his kindness is engraven on the heart of my spiritual man, and one day I may be able to make mention of it where such deeds are sure to meet their proper reward. A few hours prior to the boat's leaving, feeling myself much better, I determined to go on board. I did not like to remain behind those friends I had been travelling with, and had become more than usually attached to; so I concluded to go forward with them on the journey, the parson and the captain both encouraging me to do so. When on board, I immediately went to bed, and with care and kind attentions from my travelling friends, reached Buffalo much improved in bodily condition. From there to Albany there were but two methods of travel, — by canal-boat or by stage-coach. I concluded to take the former, partly because I did not feel inclined to jolt in a stage-coach, and partly because it was a more convenient way for me to get my little fawn along with me, which I placed under the immediate care of the chambermaid of the boat, who gave it milk and otherwise attended to it. At Buffalo my two travelling friends left me, for they were in haste, and thought canal-boat travelling too slow for them. I separated from these gentlemen at Buffalo with sincere regret, and have never seen them since. I have been told that Capt. Day has been dead many years, but for my clerical friend, I know not if he be living or dead. From Albany to New York City I made a very pleasant trip by steamboat down the picturesque and beautiful Hudson River.

CHAPTER XXX.

Thomas A. Cooper proposes a Copartnership — Chatham Theatre — Charles Giffert and the Bowery Theatre — Mr. Forrest commences his Career of Success — Author Performs at the Park Theatre — Mr. Thomas Barry — Mr. Edmund Simpson — Wm. Jones and his Biography — Mr. Archer — John Howard Payne — Charlotte Cushman — Mr. Vandenhoff — Long Tom Coffin Scott — Chatham Theatre opens under Management of Cooper & Ludlow.

I ARRIVED in the city of New York about the 1st of June, found my family there, and all well. My wife had taken a small house on Canal Street, that locality then being altogether a place for family residences of an unpretending character.

In about a month after my arrival, viz., on the 3d of July, 1828, my fifth child was born, — a son, — who is living at this time, and the father of ten living children. It is somewhat singular that this, being the only child of mine born in my native city, should have been born in the same month, the same day of the month, and the same day of the week.

During the fall of 1827 and the spring of 1828 a correspondence had taken place between Thomas A. Cooper, the celebrated tragedian, and myself, in reference to forming a partnership in two or three theatres, viz., Mobile, Cincinnati, and perhaps Pittsburg, provided we could get new ones erected in the two latter cities. I received but little encouragement in Cincinnati. The friends of Mr. Cooper (and they were a limited few, as far as I could find out) were disposed to be liberal in that way, and a few of those with whom I was acquainted felt disposed to do something likewise. But they told me very candidly in each city that they did not believe a sufficient sum could be raised to complete such a building as we would require, and as they thought should be erected, if any one were built.

Shortly after my arrival in New York, Mr. Cooper and I met at the house of his father-in-law, Judge Fairly, of that city, where we discussed the subject of the theatres at the West and South, and came to the conclusion we would let matters rest then as they were, and trust to time to develop something more favorable to our views. Before parting, Mr. Cooper imparted to me a project that he proposed undertaking, and which he wished me to assist him in working to a conclusion.

The second Bowery Theatre was then being rebuilt, and it was supposed would be finished and ready for performing in early in the coming September. Mr. Cooper had expected to be engaged for a certain number of nights soon after the opening of that establishment, but found that Mr. Gilfert, the manager of it, had made other calculations that would interfere with his expectations. Mr. Edwin Forrest, a young actor then unknown to fame, — being at that period only twenty-two years of age, — had appeared at the Park Theatre, June 23, 1826, for the benefit of Mr. Woodhull, in the character of *Othello*, and had made a favorable impression as a young actor of promise. Mr. Charles Gilfert, manager of the Bowery Theatre, had seen Mr. Forrest act the character, and immediately engaged him at \$50 a week as a stock actor for his theatre, and in the fall of that year, November 6th, Mr. Forrest appeared at the Bowery Theatre as *Othello*. Mr. Gilfert, noticing Mr. Forrest's physical and mental powers, had, with his usual managerial acumen, calculated on Mr. Forrest becoming an immense favorite with the Bowery audience, and the result proved he was right in his calculation. Mr. Forrest remained at the Bowery Theatre during the following two seasons, and had been brought forward, with certain intervals, by Mr. Gilfert as a "star." On the completion of the second Bowery Theatre, August 20, 1828, Mr. Forrest appeared and spoke the "opening address," and remained acting as a "star" in that theatre until the death of Mr. Gilfert, which occurred on the 30th of July, 1829. At the opening of this new theatre, Mr. Gilfert thought it would promote his interest to still retain Mr. Forrest as his principal attraction, and did not deem it good policy to bring forward any actor that could possibly draw off the admiration of his audiences from one who appeared to be all that they then desired as a tragedian, and one whose services he could have on terms that would not draw upon his treasury for as large sums as would Mr. Cooper and others; therefore he had refused to engage Mr. Cooper as a "star" in his theatre. This was a check to Mr. Cooper's proud ambition that he was unused to, and he felt disposed, in showing his resentment, to give Mr. Gilfert a practical lesson in managerial diplomacy. How far he succeeded the sequel will show; and this was the project that Mr. Cooper had in view, and which he desired me to assist him in carrying into effect. His proposal to me was in substance as follows: "You have come to New York for the purpose of engaging performers for your Southern and Western theatres. What you can do in that way, you can probably do as well in two months

as you could in four. Now, I would like to join with you in making a short season here in New York for one or more months, or as much longer as we can mutually find it to answer our purposes. My object is to oppose the Bowery Theatre. Your interest can doubtless be forwarded by having a place to perform in here, where you can concentrate and employ your company until the time shall arrive for you to depart for the South. The Chatham Theatre is at present offered for rent; I can obtain it upon reasonable terms for one or more months. I will contribute my services as an actor, with such influence for the theatre as I may have here. You shall contribute your services in like manner, and undertake the management of the season, bringing in your own company, with such others as it may be deemed prudent to engage, simply for the time we may keep the theatre open. It will be advisable to have all in readiness by the 1st of September, when we will open with myself as a "star" for the first two weeks, to be followed then by such attraction as we may find it to our advantage to bring forward, and thus together we will operate and share the profits or losses equally.

My principal object in visiting the East was the recruiting of my company for my coming winter campaign in the South. A few of my old company I had retained, who, having friends and relatives in New York, had come on to visit them, and being there, were very willing to be earning something, while they were gratified by meeting their old associates.

I had for years felt a desire to perform in my native city, New York, but had not then gratified it but once, which was on the occasion when I appeared in the character of *Young Wilding*, in Foote's comedy of the "Liar," for the benefit of Miss Sarah Riddle, June 29, 1826. This motive, and a desire to concentrate my company at one point previous to my departure for the South, induced me to join with Mr. Cooper in his proposed undertaking; and I set to work to carry out my part of it, by endeavoring to get together a company suitable and ready by the 1st of September. I immediately arranged engagements with my old company then in New York, and a few others, strangers to me, but known to Mr. Cooper, for the carrying out of this projected season in the Chatham Theatre. In the meantime, meeting my old acquaintance, William Jones, formerly in the West, I was asked by him to play for his benefit, then about to come off at the Park Theatre. This I consented to do. The play decided upon for his benefit was the "School of Reform," a comedy, by Morton, that being one that could be strongly cast, and would further-

more enable him to avail himself of Mr. Jackson Gray, of the New Orleans Theatre, an old acquaintance of mine, who would also act on the occasion. He remarked that Mr. Hilson would play *Bob Tyke*; Mrs. Hilson, *Mrs. Ferment*; and continuing his remark, said: "With you for *Ferment*, and Gray for *General Taragon*, I shall have a strong team to pull me through." The night was the 15th of July, 1828; the house was well filled, and the performance went off apparently to the satisfaction of the audience and the actors. While I was divesting myself of my stage-clothing, Mr. Thomas Barry, the stage-manager, I believe, at that time, came to me from Mr. Simpson, the manager of the Park Theatre, saying that if I had ever acted *Alfred Highflyer*, in the farce of "Roland for an Oliver," I would oblige him very much if I would perform the character that evening for him, as he did not feel well. I told Mr. Barry that, had I known Mr. Simpson's wishes in the afternoon, or earlier in the evening, I would have willingly obliged him, but at that short notice it was not possible for me to comply with his wishes. Furthermore, that I could not think of going on the stage without my own dresses for the character, and they could not be procured in time.

As I shall not have occasion to speak of Mr. William Jones again in the course of my narration, and as he was a person of note as an actor, and a manager of theatres, especially in the West, I would like to say something in regard to him and the closing scenes of his life's drama.

Mr. Jones was born in Maryland, in 1781. His earliest dramatic efforts were made in Richmond, Virginia, and at Philadelphia. His first appearance in New York was at the old Park Theatre, September 9, 1811, as *Old Snacks*, in the farce of "Fortune's Frolics," at which I, then a youth of sixteen years, was present. I have a vivid recollection of it, especially Mr. Hilson's performance of *Robin Roughhead* in the piece. Mr. Jones was a member of the Park company for seven years, and then he visited the West in 1818, playing at Cincinnati and Louisville, and visiting Nashville in September, 1819, and performing with me and my company during that fall and part of the winter. In 1820 he became a partner in management of the Columbia Street Theatre, Cincinnati, with Joshua Collins. In 1820 Mr. Jones brought his company to Nashville, while I was in St. Louis, and opened in the new theatre, then just finished, which stood on Cherry Street, not far from the Nashville Inn. After five years' trial in the West, he gave up management and returned to New York

to the Park Theatre, where I found him in the summer of 1828. In 1831 he was manager, in conjunction with Messrs. William Duffy and William Forrest, of the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia. He died at the residence of his friend Edwin Forrest, the tragedian, New York, December 1, 1841, aged sixty years. His wife, Julia, was a native of New York, and became an actress after marrying Mr. Jones; she played only old women. She was highly esteemed as a woman, and was an amiable wife, of unblemished character. They never had any children. She died in Philadelphia, October 15, 1847, and husband and wife lie buried side by side in "Ronaldson's burying-ground," Philadelphia.

Early in August, I thought I had got numbers enough engaged to constitute a good and efficient company. But, on consultation with Mr. Cooper, he thought we lacked what is called in stage parlance "a heavy man," — that is a man to play such characters as *Appius Claudius*, in "Virginus;" *Dionysius*, in "Damon and Pythias," and the like; and he said there was a Mr. Thomas Archer, an actor who had come to America about a year before, and was then at Providence, Rhode Island who would answer the purpose, if he could be engaged. He thought Mr. Archer was not satisfied with his situation, and would be glad to come to New York. Mr. Cooper gave me a letter of introduction to this gentleman, and I went to Providence for the purpose of engaging him. On the evening I arrived there I observed Mr. Archer's name in the bills posted for that night for the character of *Romeo*, in "Romeo and Juliet," and I thought immediately that a man playing *Romeo* was not exactly the kind of man likely to go to New York to play *Appius Claudius* and *Dionysius*. However, I went to the theatre to see what sort of actor he was. On entering the theatre and taking my seat, I heard a kind of penny-whistle voice, that sounded as though it came from the clouds — "O, *Romeo, Romeo*, wherefore art thou, *Romeo*?" Then came the thundering bass voice, that had the tone of a fireman's speaking-trumpet, "Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?" At the conclusion of which came the penny-whistle voice again, and this was followed by the double basso voice as before; and thus they went up and down, like unto the walking-beam of a steam-engine. So that finally, being unable to stand it any longer, I broke out into a loud laugh, of which I afterward felt very much ashamed, for it was quite rude; but it was an involuntary outbreak, occasioned by what appeared to me supremely ridiculous. It reminded me of what I had read many years before (written by George

Coleman, I believe) about one Orator Puff, "who thought that one voice was not quite enough, so he made use of two,—a squeak and a gruff," or something to that effect. It has been my fate to behold some *Romeos* (two only excepted) who were as unsuited for the character as a dray-horse to a lady's phaeton. Those two exceptions were, first, John Howard Payne, when he appeared upon the stage in New York, in the year 1809, being then not quite seventeen years of age, and very handsome; he *looked* the love-sick youth as well as acted it. The other exception was Charlotte Cushman, whose make-up, I thought, was admirable for the character, and whose acting of *Romeo* was more judicious and effective than that of "Master Payne," as he was called in his day. I cannot agree with Mr. George Vandenhoff in his estimate of Miss Cushman's *Romeo*, as he records it in his "Leaves of an Actor's Notebook" (page 217), published in 1860; a very pleasant and well-written book, the criticisms in which generally accord with my own views; but I must dissent from those in reference to Miss Cushman's *Romeo*; and I saw her perform that character not long after the date he speaks of (1843). He says, further, that her *fencing*, which he taught her, "was the only good point in this *hybrid* performance of hers," and continues his remarks thus: "She looks neither man nor woman in the part, or both." He says also, a few lines further on, that "*Romeo* requires a *man* to feel his passion and express his despair." Now, I think it requires a *boy*, or rather a youth who begins to imagine he is a man because he has some hair on his upper lip; for none but such can feel and utter such sweet nonsense, and it is evident to me that such a being was the ideal of Shakespeare's painting. No *man* that was not a born idiot would feel or whine his love out in such a *lackadaisical* way. I speak from what I have observed in human nature, and from what I have felt myself when I was sixteen or seventeen years of age. "O, wasn't I in love?" as *Fathom* says. Then *Romeo's* words were sweet pabulum to me. Being a *boy*, I felt like a boy; but being a *man*, my thoughts were different, and so were my expressions. I remember, when about thirty years of age, from necessity, I was compelled to study and endeavor to act the part of *Romeo* twice in one week and when I had got through with those two nights I made a solemn vow that if the Lord would spare my life I would never be guilty of such folly again; and so I returned to my first love, Mercutio, and adhered to him ever after. To make use of a *Sir Lucius O'Trigger* expression, I thought Miss Cushman in *Romeo* was just *man* enough to be a *boy*. But, *revenons à nos moutons*.

Being content to see no more of "Romeo and Juliet" that night, I left the theatre at the end of the third act and returned to my hotel; but not until I had written a few lines and left them to be delivered to Mr. Archer at the conclusion of the play, stating my object in wishing to have an interview with him, and requesting him to call on me at my hotel by nine o'clock the following morning, should he feel disposed to entertain any proposal from me to engage for the heavy business in my company. But I neither saw nor heard from Mr. Archer, he probably being indignant at my offering him any position short of that of "leading man;" nevertheless I thought he might have had the politeness to answer my note, for I was told it had been handed to him. However, we got along very well without him; for on my return to New York Mr. James M. Scott (afterwards known as Long Tom Coffin Scott) applied, was engaged, and proved to be a man not only capable of the "heavy business" in tragedy, but in various other lines, and we found him to be a very efficient member of the company for our short season in the Chatham.

The Bowery Theatre was finished in the astonishingly short time of ninety days from the day of its destruction, and opened on the 20th of August, 1828, with an "address," which was spoken by Mr. Edwin Forrest, after which was performed the comedy of the "Dramatist:" *Vapid*, Mr. George Barrett; the night's entertainment concluding with the farce of "Is it a Lie." On the 22d was performed "Damon and Pythias:" *Damon*, Mr. Edwin Forrest.

Although we were ready and could have opened about the same time with the "Bowery," yet Mr. Cooper advised that we should wait a short time for the excitement of the opening of the "New Bowery" to subside and the novelty of the building to become somewhat diminished. So we deferred our commencement until the 15th of September, when we opened the Chatham Theatre. On the heads of our bills for the opening and successive nights were the following lines:—

"To the Ladies and Gentlemen of New York:

"The subscriber being professionally excluded from the boards of the 'Bowery Theatre' by the present management, to admission to which he had conceived he had peculiar claim, and not being willing to abandon the honor of appearing before you, takes a lease of the Chatham Theatre. He hopes that a long-trying and faithful servant will not solicit in

vain for a portion of the patronage which it has ever been and always will be his endeavor to deserve.

“THOMAS A. COOPER.

“The entertainments of the evening will commence with the comedy of the ‘Honeymoon,’ followed with the comic opera of the ‘Poor Soldier.’”

The comedy was cast as follows : *Duke Aranza*, Mr. Cooper ; *Rolando*, Mr. Ludlow ; *Balthazar*, A. J. Phillips ; *Jaques* (the Mock Duke), John Mills Brown ; *Lampedo* (the starved doctor), John Sefton ; *Juliana*, Mrs. Rufus Blake ; *Volante*, Mrs. Flynn ; *Zamora*, Mrs. H. Wallack. In the comic opera : *Patrick*, Mr. J. Still ; *Darby*, Mr. A. Drake ; *Bagatelle*, Mr. J. Sefton ; *Kathleen*, Miss E. Eberle. Mrs. Blake’s *Juliana*, was beautiful and dashing ; Mrs. Flynn’s *Volante*, spirited and piquant ; Mrs. Wallack’s *Zamora*, interesting and lovable. This lady possessed a well-proportioned form, and in the male attire of the part she represented, appeared a very handsome youth. Mr. Cooper, in the *Duke Aranza*, played with all the spirit and graceful dignity of his earlier days. In his assumption of the rustic he was plain, hearty, and manly ; in his mingling with the peasantry, he was social, without losing sight of his rank ; and in his last scene was, every inch of him, a grand duke. Mr. Mills Brown was the best “Mock Duke” that I ever met with ; his ducal importance, without any visible attempt to be comic, was the funniest thing I ever witnessed in that way, which his naturally serious and somewhat melancholy face served greatly to heighten. John Sefton, in the lantern-jawed, half-starved *Doctor Lampedo*, appeared at that time just fitted for the character, for he was small and thin, and, as *Falstaff* says he was when young, “could have crept into an alderman’s thumb-ring ;” and when he said, “Consider my poor wife,” and *Balthazar* (Mr. Phillips) exclaimed, “Thy wife ! hast thou dared to think of matrimony ? No flesh upon thy bones, and take a wife ?” To which he replies, “I took a wife because I wanted flesh. I have a wife and three angelic babes, — *the very picture of their papa*” (the last six words introduced by himself), — as he said this he drew down the corners of his mouth and *squinted* horribly, and made such a face as would have made a stoic laugh. Mr. Phillips could not stand it ; he broke into a loud laugh, in which the audience joined him ; it was what the profession call “gagging,” but it was very droll. Altogether the pieces

were well acted, and I believe gave general satisfaction. Mr. Cooper played ten nights, presenting some of the most popular characters, viz.: *Virginus*, *Damon*, *Leon* ("Rule a Wife and Have a Wife"), *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Beverly* ("The Gamester"), and others, concluding at his benefit with *Penruddock*, in the "Wheel of Fortune," and *Petruchio*, in "Catharine and Petruchio." To witness these performances Mr. Cooper's friends turned out in considerable numbers, and in point of quality I fancy that the Chatham Theatre seldom held as many of the *elite* of the city before or since.

To my great astonishment, Mr. Cooper told me the day after his benefit that he was going away for a short time, to play in Philadelphia or Baltimore, I do not remember which; and I said to him, with some feeling of vexation, "What inducement can I offer the people to come to this theatre in your absence? I have been calculating on you as the great attraction to sustain this house; of course expecting you to require some interims of rest, but not for any great length of time." To this he replied that he should not be away over a fortnight, and during the interval would endeavor to send me attraction in the persons of Mr. and Mrs. Hamblin, whom he expected to meet in Philadelphia, and whom he would engage to perform for a fortnight in the Chatham Theatre; but Mr. and Mrs. Hamblin did not come. In expectation of having to fill some nights on which Mr. Cooper would necessarily require rest, I had been preparing two or three spectacular pieces for those occasions. "*Brian Boroihme*" and the "*Pilot*" had been produced in this theatre about two years before, during the management of Mr. Henry Wallack, and had been popular. Two prominent characters, one in each play, had been ably personated by Mr. James M. Scott, then engaged in our theatre. *Brian Boroihme* in the former, and *Long Tom Coffin* in the latter, had given Mr. Scott a notoriety that made him quite a feature of attraction in that kind of characters, and determined me to revive those two melodramas for the nights on which Mr. Cooper should not appear; and I had already announced "*Paul Jones*" for the evening following Mr. Cooper's benefit. In this play Mr. Charles B. Parsons made his first appearance in New York, in the character of *Paul Jones*, the "*Pilot of the German Ocean*." This, I believe, was his first appearance on any regular stage. He was introduced to me by Mr. Thomas D. Rice (noted afterwards as "*Jim Crow Rice*"), as an entire novice, belonging to an obscure amateur society in the city of New York. I heard him rehearse the character of the *Pilot*, and concluded to give

him an appearance. He did as well as a novice could be expected to do, and no more. I afterward engaged him to go with me to Mobile. This gentleman, many years after, became an eminent clergyman of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the Western States. I shall have occasion to speak of him again hereafter. Mr. Scott deserved all the credit that he had obtained as *Long Tom Coffin*. His personation of that character I have never seen equalled by any one. Mr. John Sef-ton, as *Sergeant Drill*, was unique and funny. *Captain Boroughcliffe*, by N. M. Ludlow; *Kate Plowden*, Mrs. H. Wallack. This piece, from necessity, I pushed for three nights, to tolerable houses. Mr. Cooper failing to send me any attraction in the way of "stars," and being without any preparation for the production of attractive pieces, — not supposing there would be any need of them, — and Mr. Cooper failing to return to my aid as he promised, I was thrown suddenly upon such resources as I could gather in haste; and although the stock company was a good one, yet we failed to be able to contend successfully against the New Bowery Theatre and Mr. Forrest's increasing popularity. When Mr. Cooper ceased to perform, his friends ceased to sustain the theatre; and I have always thought Mr. Cooper's treatment of me in that instance was marked with duplicity and injustice.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Author closes his Managerial Career in New York — Miss Ann Waring makes her First Appearance — Ned Raymond — Mrs. McClure — Wm. R. Blake — Mrs. Blake — Biography of John M. Brown — Biography of James M. Scott — Biography of A. J. Phillips — Alexander Drake — Wm. F. Gates — Biography of John Sefton — Biography of Mrs. Flynn — Thomas Flynn — Manager returns to the South — Biography of Thomas D. Rice — Hamilton Hossack — J. C. Lefolle — Mrs. Knight, the Vocalist.

I CLOSED my previous chapter by saying that I thought Mr. Cooper acted with duplicity in the matter of his contract with me in regard to our taking the Chatham Theatre, and my reasons for saying so are these, and they must, I think, justify my assertion in the minds of all correct-thinking persons: Mr. Cooper was well aware I had no intention of permanently remaining in New York; for he knew I had a theatre in Mobile, of which I was part owner, and that it was my desire to establish a circuit of theatres in the South and West, — these facts I had distinctly informed him of. He knew also, for I told him as much, that the only hope I had of our coming out of such an undertaking without loss, was the confidence I felt in his attraction for a short season of six or eight weeks. And with these assurances fresh in his memory, in less than two weeks he tells me he is going to Philadelphia or Baltimore to play, and finally comes not back, nor sends me any aid during the remainder of the season. Furthermore, I was told some time afterward that he did not perform in either of the above-named cities, but went directly to his residence at Bristol, near Philadelphia, and remained there until after I had departed for the South. Finding I had been entrapped, I set myself to work to get out of the difficulty in the best way possible; so began to prepare for a sudden closing of the concern, with all possible dispatch consistent with my credit as a manager. On the 27th of September Mrs. Blake took her benefit, on which occasion her daughter by her first marriage, Miss Ann D. Waring, made her *début* on the stage, as *Amanthis*, in the "Child of Nature," which she performed very well for a novice, and considering she was not fourteen years of age; but she was tall and well developed for that age, and looked very pretty and interesting. This young lady was the daughter of

Mr. Leigh Waring, an English actor, who died in this country about the close of the year 1814. This lady afterwards became the wife of James W. Wallack, Jr.

On the 30th of September, Mr. Edward Raymond, a Western actor, made his first appearance in New York, at the Chatham Theatre, as *Pescara*, in the "Apostate," following with *Pierre*, in "Venice Preserved," *Rolla*, in "Pizarro," and other characters. On the 8th of October Mrs. McClure made her first appearance in New York, on the Chatham stage, as *Lady Amarynth*, in the comedy of "Wild Oats." This lady commenced her dramatic career in the West, under my management, two years before, as Miss Meek. In a few years following she became a great favorite in Philadelphia and New York. I soon got through with the benefits, and closed my season about the last of October, 1828, contriving to pay all debts due the company and other persons, after writing to Mr. Cooper and getting from him \$50, giving an order on him for \$50 more (I believe that was the sum) to Mr. Edmunds, our treasurer, who had to pass through Bristol, Mr. Cooper's place of residence, on his way to Philadelphia; but which amount, Mr. Edmunds informed me years after, he could never get from Mr. Cooper, and I paid the amount myself to Mr. Edmunds by draft in his favor, sent from New Orleans.

The following ladies and gentlemen constituted the company at the Chatham Theatre in the fall of 1828: Thomas A. Cooper, N. M. Ludlow, William Rufus Blake, John Mills Brown, James M. Scott, John Sefton, Aaron J. Phillips, Jackson Gray, W. F. Gates, Alexander Drake, Charles B. Parsons, Charles F. McClure, John Woodhull, Messrs. Somerville, Quin, Durang, and Eberle; Mrs. Rufus Blake, Mrs. Hartwig, Mrs. Flynn, Mrs. H. Wallack, Mrs. McClure, Mrs. Ludlow, Mrs. Edstrum, Mrs. Honey, Miss E. Eberle, and Miss Dunham. Out of this number of twenty-seven persons, all are *dead* except three, and these are N. M. Ludlow, Mrs. McClure,—now Mrs. Noah, I am told,—and Miss Dunham, now Mrs. Johnson, a widow retired from the stage twenty-five years ago.

As I shall never have occasion again to speak professionally of some of these ladies and gentlemen, it will perhaps interest some of my readers to know more in regard to them.

Mr. William Rufus Blake was an excellent histrionic artist in the early portion of his professional career. His line of business was that of genteel comedy, to which a good personal appearance contributed in no small degree; but as he advanced in life he became obese in person, unfitting him for

juvenile light comedy, and he then turned his attention to genteel comedy *old* men, in which he was eminently successful. Mr. Blake was born in Nova Scotia, in 1805, made his first appearance in New York, July 12, 1825, as *Frederick*, in the comedy of the "Poor Gentleman," with success. August 26, 1826, he married the handsome widow, Mrs. Caroline Placide Waring, a dashing actress of fine abilities. Mr. Blake was stage-manager and proprietor at different times, "starred" it on occasions in England and America, was an officer and active member of the "Dramatic Fund of America," and was esteemed highly for his probity as a man and his deportment as a gentleman. He died in Boston, April 22, 1866, aged sixty-one.

Mrs. Blake, wife of the foregoing, was Caroline, eldest daughter of the celebrated Mons. Alexander Placide, at one time manager of the Charleston, South Carolina, Theatre, and of the Richmond, Virginia, Theatre at the time of its awful destruction by fire in 1811, when nearly half the city of Richmond was thrown into mourning by the disaster. Caroline was born in Charleston in 1798, and was a year older than her celebrated brother, Henry. I may say of this lady that she was almost cradled on the stage. When nine years of age she appeared at the Park Theatre, New York, in a little *ballet pantomime* called "Love's Strategem," in which she was noted for her grace and ease; no stiffness, no awkwardness, all was artistic and beautiful; and as she was when a child brilliant and interesting, so she grew up into womanhood. In 1814, Caroline Placide, then sixteen years of age, was playing young ladies at the old Anthony Street Theatre, New York, and was beautiful and fascinating. All the young men who saw her fell in love with her; but she had the good sense to marry one of her own profession, Mr. Leigh Waring, a very good actor of light comedy, and, from report, quite a gentleman in his deportment; but he died soon after their marriage, leaving her a young widow, not out of her teens. In 1826 she married Mr. Blake, as stated before; with him she lived happily forty years, until his death. On the decease of Mr. Blake she withdrew from the stage and lived in retirement with her daughter, Mrs. Wallack. They are both now dead.

Mr. John Mills Brown was born in England, in 1782, and was a fine actor of low comedy in the "old school," by which I mean the school of the days of *great actors* in English comedy, such as Munden, Dowton, and Liston. Mr. Brown first performed in America at Boston, in 1821, making his first appearance there in *Farmer Ashfield*, in the comedy of

“Speed the Plough.” He had acted at different periods in New York, but had not attracted as much notice as some comedians of less merit but more presumption. The misfortune of Mr. Brown, in a moneyed point of view, was that he was too chaste in his style to catch the “million” — “’twas *caviare* to the general;” but he was an excellent comedian, — one who never “o’erstepped the modesty of nature.” About 1838 Mr. Brown withdrew from the stage to the quiet of private life, and died on his own farm at Cold Spring, on the Hudson River, New York, April 15, 1859, aged seventy-seven years.

Mr. James M. Scott was born at Philadelphia, Pa., about the year 1798. In early life he was apprenticed to learn the trade of a tailor, which he acquired and worked at, with intervals, even after he had joined the stage, and invariably made his own clothing. He was for many years a Western actor, commencing his career there in 1820, but visited New York in 1825, and made his first appearance in that city in the character of *Rolla*, in the play of “Pizarro.” Possessing a strong voice and a manly figure, being over six feet in height, he made a very favorable impression; but it was not until 1827, when he again appeared at the same theatre in New York, in the character of *Long Tom Coffin*, in the drama of the “Pilot,” that he began to acquire any notoriety. This play was got up very effectively, and Mr. Scott became the most prominent personage in it; the piece became popular, and was attractive for years after. About the same time Knowles’s drama of “Brian Boroihme” was brought out in very handsome style at the Chatham Theatre, and again Mr. Scott became a main feature of this play; his stately figure gave to the old Irish king an imposing appearance, and it did much for the success of the piece. Sometime about 1830 Mr. Scott returned to the West, performing in the different theatres and at times managing some of them, Cincinnati and Vicksburg for awhile being of the number. In 1841 Mr. Scott again visited the Eastern theatres, and appeared at the “Bowery,” then under the management of Mr. Hamblin, on which occasion he played *Mark Antony*, in “Julius Cæsar,” to Hamblin’s *Brutus*, and Henry Wallack’s *Cassius*. For years prior to his death, Mr. Scott had become immensely fat and heavy, making a very proper and kingly appearance in fat *Henry VIII.* of England. Mr. Scott died in the city of New York, March 1, 1849, aged about fifty-one years, leaving a wife and three or four children; but none of them, I believe, have followed the profession of the stage.

Aaron J. Phillips was of Hebrew extraction, born in Amer-

ica, about the year 1796; made his first appearance on the stage at the Park Theatre, New York, May 15, 1815, as *Young Norval*, in Home's tragedy of "Douglas." He appeared again January 15, 1816, in *Frederick*, — "Lovers' Vows." He also played *Durimel*, in "The Point of Honor;" *Lothair*, in "Adelgitha;" and for his benefit, *Cæsario*, in "Alfonso, King of Castile." In the summer of 1816 Mr. Phillips visited the Western States, reaching Kentucky in the fall of that year. He engaged with the (then) only Western manager, Samuel Drake, Sr., and made his appearance at the Lexington Theatre, September, 1816, as *Young Norval*, afterwards playing *Durimel*, *Frederick*, *Lothair*, and other characters. He remained with Mr. Drake's company until the spring of 1817, when he joined the party of which the writer of this volume was a member. They proceeded to Nashville, intending in the fall to go from thence to New Orleans, an account of which has already been given in this book.

Mr. Phillips shortly after returned to New York and tried his fortunes as manager of some Eastern theatres, but without success. Finally, he settled down and ended his days as a stock actor, in the line of old men, and died in New York in 1846, aged about fifty years.

Mr. Alexander Drake was a son of Samuel Drake, Sr., the early Western manager. He was born in England, about the year 1798, and came to America with his father in 1809, landing in Boston, where they remained about four years, being engaged at the old Boston Theatre, then under the management of Powell & Dickenson. Alexander Drake made his first appearance on the Boston stage as the young *Prince of Wales*, in "Richard III.," in 1811; and shortly after, in 1813, his father and his family removed to Albany, New York, being engaged there under the management of old John Bernard. In the spring of 1815, he, with his father and family, embarked for the far distant West, for the purpose of establishing a circuit of theatres in Kentucky. Of his career in this adventure the reader will already have become tolerably well acquainted by the perusal of these previous pages. In 1824 Mr. A. Drake made his first appearance in the city of New York at the Chatham Garden Theatre (then under the control of Mr. Barriere), for the benefit of his friend William Robertson, on the 16th of July, as *Lingo*, in the musical farce of the "Agreeable Surprise;" and again on the 27th of the same month, for the benefit of Mrs. Drake (his wife), as *Doctor Rosey*, in the farce of "St. Patrick's Day." Returning shortly after to the West, he aided and assisted his father in

his Kentucky theatres, and at Cincinnati and elsewhere. He was esteemed at this time the very best low comedian that had ever visited the West, and as such remained up to the day of his death, which occurred February 10, 1830, he being then only thirty-two years of age.

William F. Gates was an American, but I am not able to say what part of the United States he was born in. His first appearance as an actor, I believe, was on the stage of the Chatham Theatre, in the part of *Orson*, in "Valentine and Orson," a pantomime, under the lesseeship of Cooper & Ludlow, September 26, 1828. Some few years after he became an immense favorite as a low comedian at the Bowery Theatre. The *habitués* of that theatre could not have been persuaded that there ever was a low comedian equal to "Bill Gates." It was told me by some one, I do not remember who, that Mr. Gates had first begun the business of life as a member of a circus company, but I cannot vouch for the truth of this. If I remember right, he was a quiet, unpretending man, of sound mind and manly nature, genial and well disposed to all mankind. He lived beloved, and died in New York City, deeply regretted, of a lingering disease, September 17, 1843.

John Sefton was born at Liverpool, England, January 15, 1805, and his first appearance in America was at Philadelphia, June, 1827. His first appearance in New York was at the Lafayette Theatre, June 7, 1828, as *Billy Fribble*, in the farce of "Miss in her Teens." His next engagement was at the Chatham Theatre, under Cooper & Ludlow's management. The first of his performances that brought Mr. John Sefton prominently before the public was his enactment of *Jemmy Twitcher*, in the drama of the "Golden Farmer." This was an original part in this country by him, a kind of slang villain, an English pickpocket, of which Mr. Sefton gave the most perfect idea. It was an unique and laughable personation, that has never been equalled in this country; and his expression and manner of saying, "Vel, vot of it?" has not been forgotten even to this day. Mr. Sefton was employed by Mr. E. A. Marshall and by Mr. Niblo as stage-manager for each of them, at different times. He was for a number of seasons engaged at Wallack's Theatre, New York. He died in that city September 19, 1868, aged nearly sixty-three years. He left a family.

Mrs. Flynn was a Miss Matilda Twibill; was born in England, and came to America with her father, who, supposing he had two youthful prodigies in his son Joseph and his

daughter Matilda, introduced them to the public in a "Dramatic Olio," at the Chatham Theatre, November 22, 1824; she being then about fourteen years of age. Two years later she appeared in the character of *Rosalie Somers*, in the comedy of "Town and Country," and being young and very beautiful, she looked the character to perfection, and was received with admiration. She was considered by the public, generally, the most beautiful woman on the stage in her day, and became in time a popular actress, carrying interest with her more from personal appearance than for fine acting. March 30, 1828, she married that singular man and comedian, Thomas Flynn, — a man that effected more extraordinary things in acting and management than any one I ever heard of, with so limited an amount of money and talents. After encountering, with her husband, many vicissitudes of fortune, Mrs. Flynn died in New York, October 28, 1851, aged thirty-seven years.

Of certain members of this company not now referred to, I shall have an opportunity of speaking hereafter, as they again come in order in this relation; of others not further mentioned, I am unable to give an account, as I know nothing of their subsequent lives.

Having closed up all business connected with the Chatham Theatre this season, I began to make my arrangements for my departure South. Of the Chatham company engaged by me for the Mobile theatre was Charles B. Parsons. Of this gentleman, so well known afterwards in the South and West, Mr. Ireland, in his "New York Stage" (vol. 1, p. 615), states, as from the *Dramatic Mirror* of 1842, that Mr. Parsons made his first appearance on the stage in the Charleston Theatre, in 1827, in the part of *Mortimer*, in "Laugh when You Can." This is most certainly an error of the *Mirror*. I have already stated that I was assured by Mr. T. D. Rice — and I believe by Mr. Parsons also — that his first attempt upon the stage in a regular theatre was on the occasion of his appearance at the Chatham Theatre in the character of the *Pilot*, in "Paul Jones," in the fall of 1828. I think that the *Mirror* has made its mistake in this way: Mr. Parsons made his first visit South in November, 1828, with my company, and opened in Mobile late in December of that year, in *Mortimer*, in "Laugh when You Can," in which play I enacted the character of *Gossamer*, Mrs. McClure being the *Mrs. Mortimer* for the occasion. The *Mirror* has confounded Charleston with Mobile, and made the year 1827 instead of 1828. Mr. Thomas D. Rice, then a novice, was engaged with me to do any thing on the stage, and to assist the "property-man" in making cer-

tain articles at times wanted in the pieces produced. He afterwards became the celebrated "Jim Crow" Rice, the first man to introduce upon the stage the genuine "corn-field negro." His fame in America and England was the means of a fortune to him. Charles Francis McClure and wife were of the old members reëngaged. Mrs. Hartwig (formerly Mrs. Tatnall) and her husband, a novice, were of the company; John Still, the vocalist; Mrs. and Mr. Honey, the latter a musician; Mrs. and Mr. Edstrum, the latter a ticket-seller for the season in Mobile, and Miss Dunham. To these were added others who went with or came after me to Mobile. Of these were William C. Drummond, usually called "Polly Drummond," from his peculiar manners; Thomas Ansell, an Englishman; Daniel Reed, of the Philadelphia and New York theatres; William Anderson, J. E. Watson, Edward S. Duncan, H. N. Barry, H. N. Cambridge, Thomas Pierson, Hamilton Hosack, a novice; — Prior, J. W. Child, William Baldwin, prompter, and wife; John Carter, wife and child; Mrs. Vos and Miss Mary Vos, Alexander Egbert. Twenty actors (including myself) and eleven actresses (including my wife); J. C. Lefolle, as leader of the orchestra; McConky and Crawl, as machinists; Lewis, property-man, and Duffield as second property-man, with Louis Valtee and other musicians engaged from the East. Mrs. E. Knight, the celebrated vocalist, with other stars, were engaged to appear during the season. We sailed about the middle of November, in the ship *St. John, Jr.*, and arrived at Mobile in about twenty days, all well.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Mobile Season of 1828 — Ansell — Biography of W. C. Drummond — Dan Reed — C. B. Parsons — Jack Barnes — A Fatal Blow — Theatre Burnt — Mr. and Mrs. Knight — Money raised for a New Theatre — New Theatre erected, and opened May 2 — J. P. Brown — Combination of Dramatic and Equestrian Performances — Temporary Theatre erected in Louisville.

MY SEASON of 1828-9 in Mobile began with every prospect of being a pleasant and profitable one. I had what I supposed a very efficient company, and the citizens seemed glad that we had returned and were prepared to afford them some amusement. We opened during the last week of December with the comedy of "Laugh when You Can," with the following cast of characters: *Gossamer*, N. M. Ludlow; *Mortimer*, C. B. Parsons; *Bonus*, D. Reed; *Sambo*, Watson; *Miss Gloomly*, Mrs. Ludlow; *Mrs. Mortimer*, Mrs. McClure; *Emily*, Miss Dunham. After which we performed the farce of "The Weathercock:" *Tristram Fickle*, Ludlow; *Variella*, Mrs. McClure; others not remembered. The company generally seemed to give satisfaction, with the exception of Mr. Ansell and Mr. Drummond. The former was quite inadequate as a leading tragedian, the line for which he was engaged by me, upon the recommendation of a New York theatrical agent, who had never seen him act. But I found this gentleman quite inadequate as a leading tragedian, being dull and formal, without the slightest passion or impulsiveness. I came to the conclusion that he had been, at no very distant period, a country schoolmaster. He was a man of a good education, and had the deportment of a gentleman, but no more fit to be an actor than I would have been to be pope of Rome. He left me at the end of the season, and I heard nothing of him until about twenty years after, when I was told he had been for a number of years a lawyer, — and, I believe, a judge, — residing in one of the western counties of Missouri.

As for Mr. Drummond, he had abandoned *dancing*, what he had been used to, and was most fit for, and had fallen into a delusion that he was a great *actor*; but as neither the audience nor manager could view him in that light, why, we soon parted to meet no more. As this gentleman, from a peculiar combination of circumstances, became of some notoriety during

his theatrical career, and as I shall not have occasion to speak of him again, I will give my readers a slight sketch of him here. When I first saw Mr. Drummond he was engaged at the Albany (N. Y.) Theatre, in 1814, under the management of old John Bernard, his situation being that of "ballet-master" and principal dancer of that theatre, with the privilege of playing occasionally when called on by the management. In 1817 he married the beautiful Miss Anne J. Henry, whose parents were favorite actors in the early dramatic companies of America; but both dying when their daughter was very young, she had been reared and educated by Mrs. Barnes, a favorite actress in old women on the Boston stage. Miss Henry, as she grew to womanhood became a most beautiful and fascinating *danseuse*, and at the age of sixteen married Mr. Drummond. But the marriage was not a happy one, and after living together for some few years, and having two children, both daughters, the lady obtained a divorce from him on the plea of ill-treatment; and then resuming her maiden name of Henry, and turning her attention entirely to acting, became one of the most popular actresses of her day, and as Mrs. Henry, in 1825 she became the wife of Mr. George H. Barrett. A contemporary writer, speaking of this lady's death, which occurred in Boston, December, 1853, says that "her miraculously preserved beauty was wonderful; for even at the age of fifty it seemed as fresh and charming as in her girlhood." After the divorced wife's marriage with Mr. Barrett, Mr. Drummond became moody and querulous, finding fault with everybody and every thing, and making himself generally disagreeable. This continued till her death; then it was said that, although he continued on the stage, he became a perfect misanthrope, avoiding communion with his fellows, and growling in his den like a hurt bear. There can be no doubt that Mr. Drummond loved this companion of his early years even to the day of his death, which occurred in the city of New York, February 21, 1871. His two daughters by this, his only wife, married two prosperous merchants of Boston. They attended the death-bed of their mother with most tender affection.

There is one other person, as his name will not appear again in these annals, I will make some mention of here; I refer to Mr. D. Reed, familiarly called "Dan Reed." This gentleman was an actor of medium ability in the general range of the drama, could play almost any description of character, from high tragedy to low comedy, and do it creditably; indeed, if he had possessed application and system, would have distinguished himself in almost any line of characters on which he

should have thrown the full force of his efforts and genius. He was ambitious to succeed, but lacked the proper methods of success. He was many years on the stage of the Park Theatre, New York, as a man of general utility, having made his first appearance in that city and on that stage as *Rosenkranz*, to Mr. Maywood's *Hamlet*, June 4, 1819. Mr. Reed died in Philadelphia, where he had been engaged as an actor, October 6, 1836, being found dead in his bed, to which he had retired the previous night in his usual health; supposed to be a disease of the heart.

As the season progressed, I saw clearly that Mr. Ansell was not meeting the expectations of the public as a leading man, and I thought I would try Mr. Parsons, novice as he was then. With this view I put up for performance M. G. Lewis's tragedy of the "Castle Spectre," casting Mr. Parsons for *Earl Osmond*, the leading tragedy character; *Angela*, the leading female character, I gave to Mrs. McClure. Although Mr. Parsons was crude and unfinished, he satisfied the audience better than Mr. Ansell could have done. I then tried Mr. P. in *Count de Valmont*, in Diamond's play of the "Foundling of the Forest," following this up with the character of *Reuben Glenroy*, in Morton's comedy of "Town and Country," in both of which he acquitted himself creditably. During these nights, and others when Mr. Parsons enacted the leading character, Mr. Ansell was not called upon to play an inferior character, but was left out of the particular play. However, this did not satisfy him, and he made complaints; so that finally I was obliged to tell him the reason why I had left him out of those pieces, thinking that he would propose to cancel his engagement, which I would very gladly have consented to. But he did not take that course, for the reason, as he said, he "could not afford to do so." He continued on, but did not complain as much as before.

Mr. Rice soon began to display, in a rudimental way, that peculiar talent that afterwards, being more fully developed, became the source of considerable wealth to him. The first effort of his that attracted my attention particularly was his performance of *Wormwood*, in Mr. Buckstone's farce of the "Lottery Ticket." He possessed the only book of it convenient to be had, and at his request I cast him for that character. For a novice, it certainly was a very commendable piece of acting; but I was told it was a very close imitation of Mr. James Roberts, the original of the character in the United States, who was about that time a highly popular comedian of the Bowery Theatre, New York. Not long after, I desired to

play the farce of "Family Jars," then new in this country, and when about to cast the piece, Mr. Rice asked me, as a special favor, to allow him to play the part of *Old Delf*; he saying at the same time he would do it in imitation of old Jack Barnes, of New York, who had made the farce highly popular in America. As Mr. Rice had exhibited to me his powers of imitation in depicting the peculiarities of other performers, I indulged him in this instance, and must say that his copy was but little inferior to the original. My estimate of Mr. Rice's merit as a comedian was, during most of his career, that he had more talent than genius; and that talent consisted in his great fidelity in imitating the broad and prominent peculiarities of other persons, as was evident in his close delineations of the corn-field negro, drawn from real life, and for which he was justly celebrated in the latter portion of his career.

While speaking of this farce of "Family Jars," I will take occasion to say that in the performance of it the public and myself were not a little surprised with another unexpected display of hitherto concealed dramatic powers; it was in the performance of *Liddy Lorigan*, by Mrs. McClure. The character is a poor, but good-hearted Irish girl, who is the wife — privately married — of *Diggory*, son of old *Delf*, an employee in a crockery store. This Irish girl, to the surprise of everybody present, Mrs. McClure made a prominent feature of the farce, although she has, I believe, but two scenes; but these were so admirably performed, with such a rich brogue, and such freedom and ease, that she threw everybody on the stage with her entirely into the shade. The farce was repeated several times, becoming very popular with the Mobileans.

The first two months of this theatrical season were not as remunerative as the corresponding ones of the previous year; still I did not lose money during those months. But then a blow came that I felt the effects of for seven years. On the morning of the 1st of March, 1829, being Sunday, I was awakened, a short time before daylight, by a person knocking violently at the door of my dwelling, and shouting in a loud voice that the "theatre was on fire!" I sprang out of bed, and hurriedly clothing myself, stepped out upon the gallery of my house, and lo! before me, about three hundred yards off, I saw the flames streaming through the windows of the building that contained nearly all of my earthly means, and not a dollar on that, or any thing therein, insured. I went back to my bed-room, feeling assured that nothing had been or could be saved; dressed myself, and walked to the theatre, arriving

at the moment that the roof fell in, smothering the flames, and, as I felt at the time, almost smothering me. The hard earnings of years of labor and anxiety had been snatched from me by the devouring element in a few hours.

The intensity of my regrets were heightened by the conviction that through my own neglect or inadvertence the blow was made more heavy than it should have been. I was owner of more than one-half of the building and scenery destroyed, besides being sole owner of a large amount of wardrobe, music, and books, and other valuables that could not be soon, if ever, replaced. On these I had taken out a policy of insurance for a few thousand dollars, but that had expired about ten days prior to the burning. Through a press of business, I had not attended to having my policy renewed, although scarcely a night transpired during the interim that I did not think of it, and resolve that the next day I would go to the insurance office and take out a new policy, and, if possible, for an increased amount. But "procrastination" is not only the "thief of time," but of money also. I did not observe a legitimate business rule, and I paid dearly for the negligence. Sunday was to me a day of humiliation, if not of prayer. Many friends called to condole with me; and Mr. Edward Knight called to inquire after his *music*, which I had the pleasure of stating was safe in my dwelling, whither I had taken it on going home the previous night, in order to look it over on the Sunday following, with the view of providing persons for certain choruses in certain operas that we proposed to do during the engagement of Mrs. Knight, that was to have commenced on the coming Monday. On the Monday following, a request appeared in a morning newspaper, calling a meeting of citizens on the evening of the day following, to take into consideration the rebuilding of the theatre. I do not know who were the originators of this movement, and being deeply depressed in feelings at the time, and somewhat reckless of the future, I did not attend the meeting. I was informed, however, the next day after, that there had been a very respectable attendance, both in numbers and quality of the persons. A gentleman with whom I was but slightly acquainted, David Crawford, Esq., a young and popular attorney-at-law, addressed the meeting in my behalf. Other speeches followed Mr. Crawford's, and various plans were proposed, but the point desired by Mr. Crawford could not be reached, which was a resolution and subscription to proceed at once to the erection of another theatre on the site of the one just then burned down. Some said the situation was not

central enough, others that the building should not be hurriedly undertaken, but time allowed to find a suitable location for it, and to mature plans and adjust conditions. In vain did Mr. Crawford strive to impress on them the necessity of immediate and rapid action, by pointing out to them the situation of affairs, — a company of actors, musicians, carpenters, and others, in all fifty or sixty persons, thrown unexpectedly out of employment, and many of them without the means of reaching theatres — then few and far between — where they could obtain employment. After much debating, and many suggestions from various persons, the meeting ended in this result: A paper was drawn up and handed round for signatures, as subscribers, to signify opposite to their names such sums as they were willing to contribute as a *donation* to erect, on rented ground, a temporary theatre, — such as could be put up within *thirty* days, — and in this way afford the company an opportunity to perform a few weeks prior to the warm season, and to take their benefits, thus obtaining means with which they could reach other cities.

In aid of this project the sum of about two thousand dollars was obtained, in sums of from ten to fifty dollars, the greater portion being subscribed by those present at the meeting, and the rest in a day or two after. The subscription list was put into the possession of a friend of mine that was present at the meeting, with a request to hand it to me, and say that if such a sum as might be obtained in that way would aid me in erecting a place in which I could finish my season and fulfil engagements to my company, that the gentlemen whose signatures were thereunto attached would pay the sums opposite to their names, and feel a pleasure in thus assisting me and my company, and would be highly gratified by a renewal of the pleasant evenings afforded by our performances.

In the present day the sum of \$2,000, subscribed on an occasion like the one herein named might, with some persons, seem a *small* affair; but it should be recollected that the population of Mobile was at that early period not above seven thousand persons, and theatres did not cost so much to build as at the present day, for the public was content with much plainer buildings, in which they enjoyed good acting as much as they probably would now in much more expensive structures.

In a few days the stunning effects of the blow on my fortunes, being the first of any magnitude I had so far encountered, were beginning to subside, and I saw there was a necessity for the renewal of my efforts, and a strong one, that I

should not succumb to ill-fortune, for I had a wife and four children dependant on my exertions. Besides, certain of the performers had each hopes of making money by a "benefit," an object in those days looked forward to with more hopes, often, than were realized. Impelled with these motives, I immediately commenced the work of collecting those sums already subscribed, and was fortunate enough to have a few additions made to the list, collecting in all, as has been previously stated, about two thousand dollars. On consultation with my stage-carpenters, Messrs. McConkey and Crowl, and a city builder, I ascertained that to put up a frame building such as described, about ninety by fifty feet, in the plainest manner, just the frame-work and enclosure, without any seats, would cost \$4,000. Then there was all the other work inside, such as stage, proscenium, scenery, and gas-fixtures; the cost of these I was not able to ascertain in any short time. I had been buying up the stock of the theatre as rapidly as I could find any for sale and the means wherewith to purchase it, so I was thus not flush in cash. Nevertheless, situated as I was, I saw that if I would retain my company and continue my management, some important and decisive movement should be made with the least possible delay; so I determined that, could a lot be found suitable, and could I obtain credit for a portion of the cost of the undertaking, I would make an effort to reinstate myself as manager of a Mobile theatre, however plain and unpretending it might be at the commencement.

I soon found a piece of ground more central than that of the late theatre, being on St. Francis Street, north side, about four squares west, if I remember aright, from Royal Street, a principal business street of the city. I contracted with a city "builder" to put up the house only, he to furnish all material and allow me six and twelve months for the payment of two-thirds of the cost thereof. My own carpenters undertook all the inside work and the frame-work for the scenery, and after engaging two scene-painters from New Orleans, I went at the work with renewed energy and a determination to have it done within thirty days. In this I did not succeed, but I had it ready to open in forty-two working days from the time of commencement.

The structure was plain and primitive in construction and finish; there was no time for elaborate ornament. Yet in the plain condition that it was, and the economy with which it had been done, it cost me \$7,000; of this, \$5,000 I had to provide for. The ground was leased only for a short term of years. During the period of rebuilding, my company were playing at

Montgomery, Alabama, to which place I had sent all that chose to remain with me and share my fortunes; these were under the stage-management of Mr. Parsons, my wife going along as manageress and treasurer. The persons who left me on the destruction of the theatre were Mr. Reed, Mr. Drummond, Mr. Ansell, Mr. Hosack, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Prior, Mr. and Mrs. Honey, Mr. Still, and of the musicians, Mr. Lefolle and Mr. Valtee. There was an absolute necessity for me to remain in Mobile; therefore I did not go to Montgomery. My presence in the former place was necessary to aid and direct in the speedy erection of the building. At Montgomery I did not expect to make any money; the company was too large and the town too small, to admit of a hope of profit. I felt I should be fortunate if they succeeded in making their salaries and the other expenses attending the venture, and this they did accomplish. When I had got the house into a condition that would allow us to begin playing, I recalled my company, and we opened the house about the 2d of May, 1829, with Reynolds's comedy of "The Dramatist, or Stop Him who Can," and the farce of "Fire and Water." The first piece was cast as follows: *Lord Scratch*, Mr. E. S. Duncan; *Vapid* (the dramatist), Mr. N. M. Ludlow; *Floriville*, Mr. J. E. Watson; *Ennui*, Mr. T. D. Rice; *Neville*, Mr. C. F. McClure; *Wilmington*, Mr. H. N. Cambridge; *Peter*, Mr. Baldwin; *Lady Waitfort*, Mrs. Baldwin; *Miss Courtney*, Mrs. McClure; *Marianne*, Miss Dunham; *Letty*, Mrs. Ludlow. The farce was cast thus: *Frederick*, Mr. N. M. Ludlow; *Jacob*, Mr. T. D. Rice; *Fanny*, Miss Dunham; *Furbish*, Mrs. Ludlow; others not remembered. The house was well filled, and the performers all received with marked applause, and every person in the house seemed well satisfied with the plain, but comfortable surroundings of the evening. After two or three nights' performances I began the "benefits." Nearly every member of the company put his or her name up for a benefit, and every one made money, more or less, according as they were estimated by the public. Mr. McClure's, my own and my wife's, Miss Dunham's, and Mr. Parsons' were the better ones. Even the two stage-carpenters, Messrs. McConkey and Crowl, took a joint benefit, and the public evinced a proper appreciation of their exertions in getting the new house so quickly tenantable. Our benefits occupied about two weeks of the "after-season," and as they were about concluding, Mr. J. Purdy Brown, a popular equestrian manager of those days in the West and South, arrived in Mobile with his circus company. Now, with this gentleman I had made an engagement

to perform certain equestrian dramas in the theatre recently burned. After some little difficulty I arranged with him to play in the new theatre some of those pieces which required the least display of scenery, as "Timour, the Tartar," "El Hyder," and "Valentine and Orson," and we commenced getting them ready, while Mr. Brown gave a week's entertainment to the citizens of equestrian sports beneath the canvas.

When all was ready, we opened with "Timour, the Tartar," in which Mrs. Hartwig (formerly Mrs. Tatnall) performed the character of *Zorilda*, in which she acquired considerable reputation in former years. This lady, after the burning of the theatre, had been away on a short "starring" excursion, but returned, as by previous arrangement, to perform in these equestrian dramas, in all of which she was quite *au fait*. The horse-drama did very well for both Mr. Brown and myself. As Mr. Brown's horses seemed to *draw* well, the project was suggested to my mind of trying, as an experiment, a combination of dramatic and equestrian performances for the ensuing summer in the principal towns of the West. This idea I imparted to Mr. Brown, and he very readily fell into my views. My plan was to commence each evening's performance with a clever little piece, a petit comedy or a laughable farce, and conclude with a "ring performance" by the equestrians, finishing each season by bringing both divisions together on the stage in equestrian dramas. As the arrangement was an experiment for the summer and early fall months, we were to use the canvas for ring performances and the audience, and build a small addition, in a cheap way, for the stage department, in each town that we should stop at, where convenient accommodations for the purpose could not be found ready to our hands. The first town we were to stop at was Natchez; but this was afterwards abandoned, and Louisville made the first point of combination. Mr. Brown, with his circus, was to go through Mississippi, Tennessee, and Southern Kentucky, and meet me at Louisville, to which point I was to proceed at once, get a place ready suitable for our purpose, and if he was not there promptly at the time, I was to give such performances as I could with my company alone. We had concluded to put up a temporary building in Louisville, should it be found necessary, with a stage, and seats for an audience of five hundred persons, — Mr. Brown agreeing to take the building at first cost, should I not wish to continue the combination as a permanency. He knew that there was an amphitheatre at Cincinnati that he could get whenever he wanted it, but there

was none at Louisville, and his plan was to use these two cities for portions of his fall and winter seasons.

As soon as my understanding with Mr. Purdy Brown was concluded, I dispatched my principal carpenter, Mr. McConkey, forward to Louisville, with instructions to look for a situation suited to our purpose in that city, and, if possible, one with a building on it that could, without much expense, be transformed into an amphitheatre; and if no such building could be found, to look for a lot of proper dimensions and locality, and for lumber and other materials wherewith to erect a temporary building suited to our uses. In about a week after the departure of Mr. Brown and his circus company I had closed up my business in Mobile and the theatre, depositing the keys of the building with the carpenter who erected it, and with my company started for Kentucky, by the way of New Orleans and the Mississippi River.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Company play in Louisville—Proceed to Cincinnati—Mr. Woodruff and the Bath Theatre—Mr. Brown builds a New Theatre in Mobile—Miss Petrie—James Howard, the Vocalist—Dog of Montargis—Mr. and Mrs. Sloman—Season closes.

WITH this chapter I commence an account of a succession of six or seven years of ill-luck, and the most unhappy portion of my life, the incidents of which, so far as I can recollect them, come back to me like those of a distressing dream. Every effort that I made seemed to end disastrously; this I felt more acutely for the reason that the early portions of my dramatic career had been successful and pleasant. However, I was blest with a good, stubborn nature, inherited from my father, that would not succumb to any mischance; and from my mother a faith that had implicit confidence in a Heavenly Father, whom, she believed, turned every misfortune of life into a blessing to those who trusted in His love and wisdom; and now, as the evening shades of life are closing around me, I thank God that I had a mother so constituted and so true to her position as to instil into my mind such holy truths. But I am wandering from my course.

I found on my arrival in Louisville that Mr. McConkey, my carpenter, had not been able to procure any lot with a building on it that was convertible to our uses; but he had found a vacant one at the corner of Jefferson and a cross street, the name of which I do not recollect. It was about three or four hundred feet north (I believe) of the old Louisville Theatre; I mean the first one built, then under the control of my old manager, Samuel Drake, Sr. The lot was well situated, being on a corner of two streets, having about sixty feet front on Jefferson Street, and running back the same width nearly to another street. In the rear was a livery-stable, — convenient, as I thought, for the stabling of Mr. Brown's horses. McConkey concluded to put up a building on this ground in the cheapest possible way, and so constructed as to answer for either dramatic or equestrian performances, or both. My plan was to have a pit so contrived with movable seats that it could be converted into a ring for the horses in a very few

minutes. Upon calculations made, he was induced to believe I could put up this building at the least cost by purchasing the materials necessary myself, and having the work done under the supervision of my own carpenters, assisted by men employed by them, and subject to their control and directions. On this plan he had already commenced, and in two weeks' time he had the building in a condition to perform in, — rough, but substantial. I had taken precaution to bring with me from Mobile most of the scenes and “set-pieces,” such as cottages, rock and cave pieces, smooth and rough waters, and sundry others that it would be tiresome to set down here. From the time of Mr. Brown's leaving Mobile up to this period I had heard nothing from him personally, and by report only that he had visited and left certain towns on his way to the West.

The house being ready, and I not hearing from Mr. Brown, I concluded, as my company were getting impatient, to begin by myself, and without the aid of the horses; so about the 22d of June, 1829, I opened the season with my favorite comedy of the “Honeymoon,” and the farce of the “Rendezvous.” The comedy was cast as follows: *Duke Aranza*, N. M. Ludlow; *Rolando*, C. B. Parsons; *Jaques*, W. McCafferty (joined us during the after-season at Mobile); *Juliana*, Mrs. Ludlow; *Volante*, Mrs. McClure; *Zamora*, Miss Dunham; others not recollected. The second night the entertainments were “The Stranger” and farce of the “Liar:” *Stranger* and *Young Wilding*, N. M. Ludlow.

We had performed about one week when I received a letter from Mr. Brown, dated at a village he was about to leave, saying he would be in Cincinnati on the 4th of July, and hoped he would find me there. Here was a dreadful mishap. I was taken “all aback,” as the sailors say, and was quite in a dilemma as to what I should do. After an hour's reflection, I wrote to him at Cincinnati, that it was not possible for me to wind up my business in Louisville and meet him on the day he had specified, but that I would be there so as to commence with dramatic performances on the 11th of July, just one week later than the time proposed in his letter. I suggested that I thought it would be well enough for him to begin on the 4th with equestrian performances, and continue with such for a week, and I would be there the following week with my company to aid him. After dispatching my letter, I got another from Mr. Brown, saying that if I could not be in Cincinnati for the 4th of July, he would begin without me (this was before he had received my letter to him),

which, he said, "on second thought," he believed would be the better plan.

I immediately advertised the "last week" of my company's performance for the present, saying I would return as soon as the heat of the summer was past. The newspapers expressed regrets at our short visit, and said they hoped to see us in the fall; that the citizens had been highly gratified by the performances of the company, and would greet our return with fuller houses when the weather should have become cooler. I closed my short season in Louisville on the night of the 4th of July, 1827, with Mr. M. Noah's national drama of "She would be a Soldier," or the "Plains of Chippewa:" *General Scott*, Mr. Parsons; *Lennox* (a young lieutenant), N. M. Ludlow; *Christine* (his sweetheart), Mrs. McClure; followed by the farce of "The Review:" *Caleb Quotem*, N. M. Ludlow; *John Lump*, J. E. Watson; *Looney McTwalter*, McCafferty; *Deputy Bull*, E. S. Duncan; *Grace Gaylove*, Miss Dunham; *Lucy*, Mrs. Ludlow; others not remembered. I left a portion of the scenery of the Louisville house standing there, and took with me only a portion of such as could be easily handled, knowing that there were some scenes in the building we should occupy in Cincinnati. This building had been erected years before by an old gentleman of the name of Woodruff for a "bath-house," and stood, if I remember rightly, on Sycamore Street above Fourth. In time he had added a "ring" to it for circus performances, and finally erected in the house (bath-house) portion a stage, added a few scenes, and in this situation he rented the building for equestrian or dramatic performances, as opportunities offered. It was a dirty, dingy place, into which I was really ashamed to invite people to enter as a place of amusement; but there was no help for it. The old Columbia Street Theatre — which, by-the-bye, was but a trifle better — was under the control of Mr. Drake, who, I had reason then to believe, would not have rented it to us. Besides, we could not have used the equestrian branch of the joint company to advantage in the latter-named building. The first week of the joint performances of the actors and the horses answered our purpose well. The old "bath-house" was nearly filled every night, although we gave them none but old pieces, such as had been performed by other companies frequently, viz., "Charles the Second," "Catharine and Petruccio," "Liar," "Promissory Note," "Family Jars," "Lottery Ticket," and the like. During the second week of the combination there was a falling off of receipts. The ring performances began to stale, and the dramatic ones lacked nov-

elty, which was necessary after the effects of the new faces had passed off.

At the close of the second week I was very much astonished at Mr. Brown calling at my lodgings, and informing me that he "believed he would take his departure for the East on the coming Monday, this being Saturday." Here was another thunder-clap! But I coolly remarked to Mr. Brown, "Do I understand you to say that you take your horses away, and leave me here unprovided with any novelty, to battle it alone?" "Yes, he thought I might do as well without the horses as with them, and he was sure he could do better with his circus alone; thus both would have a chance of making money, whereas together, and dividing the receipts, neither could make any." To this I replied, "Then, Mr. Brown, if I comprehend your meaning, it is that you propose to retract the agreement existing between us?" He said he "was not aware of any agreement between us for any definite length of time, and he had come to the conclusion we could both do better alone." I remarked to him it was true we had no *written* agreement for any specified length of continuance of the co-partnership, but that we both certainly intended and expected it to continue more than two weeks, or even four; and I considered we had not given the experiment, as yet, a fair trial; that I had not placed much reliance on success at Cincinnati, and had he joined me in Louisville, as agreed on between us in Mobile, he would, I was sure, have looked upon the venture with more confidence in its success, and our progress thus far would have proved more remunerative.

But I'll not tire the reader with our discussion of the subject. Suffice it to say, Mr. Brown persisted in his wish to separate the companies, and I was too proud to urge him to continue on; so we parted. In the separation, I consented to retain the building I had put up in Louisville as my own, he to pay a reasonable rent for it, if at any time, in passing through Louisville, he should wish to perform in that city, and the building should be unoccupied at the time. This sudden and unexpected movement of Mr. Brown was very embarrassing to me, and interfered greatly with my expectations. I had for a number of years been possessed of the idea that a combination of dramatic and equestrian performances on a liberal scale, and judiciously managed, would be a money-making business; and although I had the usual antipathy of actors to sawdust and its concomitants, yet, as a *manager*, I believed there was "money in it." In pursuance of this belief, ten years after Mr. Brown's interposing a check to the further

testing of this idea, I did undertake and carry out the project, and it resulted in making for myself and partner, clear of all expenses, \$20,000 in *eighteen* consecutive weeks of performance.

Some of my friends urged me to commence an action against Mr. Brown for breach of contract; but I always had an aversion to *lawsuits*, and besides I had no writings in regard to our agreement, nor verbal testimony that I could be sure of, nor had I leisure or money to spare towards the furtherance of a lawsuit. I have several times yielded to what I thought unjust demands rather than have a lawsuit by resisting them. When a man takes my coat, I would rather give him my cloak also than law about it.

The fact has been, that during my early business adventures in life, I was too confiding, and thought "men honest that but seemed to be so;" however, sad experience has taught me to believe they may be otherwise, and time has convinced me that a maxim given to me by an uncle, my mother's brother (he never gave me any thing else), while I was yet a boy, had more truth than ill-nature in it. The maxim was this: "You have doubtless heard the saying, 'Consider every man honest until you prove him otherwise.' Well, sir, *reverse* that; consider every man a rogue till you prove him to be an honest man, and then greatly respect him, for there are but few such in the world." He died a rich man and a reputed honest one.

I do not intend to charge Mr. Brown with direct dishonesty of purpose and positive intention of deception, but rather with no purpose at all; an undigested, heedless, and slovenly manner of conducting his business. As an instance of his method of management, I will mention a circumstance I was told of, that transpired about four years after his separation from me at Cincinnati.

Mr. Brown erected in Mobile, Alabama, in 1833, a building on St. Emanuel Street, west side, near Dauphin Street, which he intended to occupy as a dramatic and equestrian establishment, under his personal management, and which he had opened as such in the spring of 1834. In order to secure all the attraction possible in the dramatic way, it was said he engaged *three* "stars" that happened to be passing through Mobile about the same time, agreeing to give each a *third* of the entire receipts of each night's joint performance. The house was well filled each night, but he was greatly surprised and much vexed, after settling with his three "stars," to find

there was nothing of the receipts left for *himself*, and that he was *minus* his entire expenses for the term of their engagement. Poor fellow! that or a late *crab supper* killed him, and I rented his building the ensuing fall for dramatic performances alone, and retained it for five years.

I kept open the "Bath Theatre," as the actors facetiously called the old bath-house, for one week after the departure of the circus company, playing a succession of comedies and farces, as "Laugh when You Can," "Way to get Married," "John Bull," "Hypocrite," "Heir at Law," and "Poor Gentleman." In the first mentioned I enacted *Gossamer*; in the second, *Tangent*; in the third, *Tom Shuffleton*; in the fifth, *Doctor Pangloss*; in the sixth, *Frederick*. On the night of the "Hypocrite" I did not act; Mr. McClure performed my part of *Colonel Lambert*, and Mr. Parsons appeared as *Doctor Cantwell*, a character he sustained very well on more than one occasion. But although the audiences seemed very well pleased, and the applause liberal, yet there was a considerable drawback on our pleasure from the fact that they were not numerous enough. This, and the weather being very hot, induced me to close the house for a time. We all remained in Cincinnati during the vacation, excepting Mr. and Mrs. Baldwin, who went East. During the close of the house I was not idle, for I saw clearly I had to do something that would draw the people to see us when I again commenced performances, and I set my wits to work to contrive what that something should be. As the legitimate drama appeared to possess but little attraction for the Cincinnatians, I decided upon trying the illegitimate upon them; and this I found to answer my purpose better. With Mr. McCafferty as my scene-painter, assisted by Messrs. McConkey and Crowl as machinists and stage-carpenters, I went to work to change the condition of the interior portion of the building, by putting seats into the "ring," and thus providing accommodations for a large number of persons at twenty-five cents entrance tickets. I also made alterations that added to the comfort of those who occupied the seats of the box-circle, and who paid fifty cents entrance price; likewise erected a gallery above and back from the boxes, with seats at fifteen cents entrance. The interior, thus arranged, would seat about eight hundred persons. I had some painting done in the way of decorating the interior portions of the house, and some scenes retouched with fresh work, and others entirely painted and altered in their appearance. While this work was progressing, I was

additionally busied in getting ready the nautical drama of "Paul Jones, or the Pilot of the German Ocean," it having never been produced in Cincinnati, up to that time.

On Wednesday, August 26th, I reopened the "Bath Theatre" with the comedy of "Town and Country:" *Reuben Glenroy*, Mr. C. B. Parsons; *Kit Cosey*, N. M. Ludlow; *Charles Plastic*, H. N. Barry; *Captain Glenroy*, C. F. McClure; *Trot*, E. L. Duncan; *Hawbuck*, J. E. Watson; *Hon. Mrs. Glenroy*, Miss Dunham; *Rosalie Somers*, Mrs. McClure; *Mrs. Trot*, Mrs. Ludlow; *Mrs. Moreen*, Mrs. Edstrum; *Taffline*, Miss E. Petrie. After which was performed the comic opera, "Of Age To-morrow:" *Frederick* (Baron Willinghurst), N. M. Ludlow; *Baron Piffleberg*, E. L. Duncan; *Hans Molkus*, W. McCafferty; *Lady Brumback*, Mrs. Ludlow; *Sophia*, Miss Dunham; *Maria*, Miss E. Petrie. The house was well filled, and the audience seemed pleased with the performance and the improvements of the interior of the building.

During the vacation I had engaged Miss Caroline Rowe, who could do any kind of business respectably that her *petite* figure would admit of, which she willingly did for the sake of forwarding business, and was the most obliging and attentive lady in that way that I ever met with in the profession. I also engaged Miss Eliza Petrie, a very good and obliging young lady, who sang very sweetly.

I should have mentioned that among other improvements was an addition to the stage of about fifteen feet, making its entire depth about forty feet, its width being about twenty-five feet clear of the "wings," or side-scenes. This gave room to perform certain scenic pieces, which could not have been done on the previous small stage.

All things being completed for it, I presented to the public of Cincinnati on *Saturday, August 29, 1829*, the first representation given them of "Paul Jones," cast as follows: *The Pilot*, A. W. Jackson; *Colonel Howard*, E. S. Duncan; *Captain Boroughcliffe*, N. M. Ludlow; *Long Tom Coffin*, C. B. Parsons; *Barnstable*, Mr. Barry; *Sergeant Drill*, McCafferty; *Lieutenant Griffith*, McClure; *Kate Plowden*, Miss Dunham; *Cecilia*, Miss Petrie.

A ship, full rigged, with her sails set (the working of which was conducted by Messrs. McConkey and Crawl), with the *Pilot* on board, with other persons, was seen entering on the back of the stage, moving in accordance with the action of the sea; she descended to the front of the stage, a man with a lead calling the soundings; suddenly the *Pilot* gave orders "'bout ship!" the sails were rapidly shifted in com-

pliance with the order, the wind swelled them, the vessel careened to the pressure, and after the "tack," she "stood out to sea again," amidst shouts of admiration and the general applause of the house. I should have said that the width of the stage had been considerably increased in this scene, the wings having been drawn back, and the whole stage made to represent a *rough sea*, the waves rolling and the vessel yielding to them in a very natural way. Within a year of this present writing, I read in a newspaper a description given by a foreign correspondent of a similar scene introduced in some play on the French stage, and giving it as a new and wonderful specimen of the perfection of stage management in that enlightened country. The representation of this drama produced considerable excitement among such of the population as dare venture inside of a theatre. An expression introduced by me in the character of *Captain Boroughcliffe* (never dreamed of by the author) became a kind of *catch-phrase* that could be heard from mouths of young and old frequenters of the theatre then, and for years after. Mr. Parsons obtained much credit for his representations of *Long Tom Coffin*, but the people had not then seen J. M. Scott in the same character. We performed this play to very fair houses for six successive nights, and it was a good Saturday night piece for several nights more. When I found the receipts of the "Paul Jones" nights drop down to the average of other nights, I concluded to lay this drama aside for a time and bring out the spectacular drama called "Cherry and Fair Star," which had not then been performed in the western theatres.

In preparing this spectacle I dismantled our ship, taking down the masts and rigging, changed the form of the prow and stern, and by paint and gilding transformed her into a splendid Eastern galley, furnished with silken sails and streamers, in the most gorgeous style of Oriental splendor. This, with some new scenes and set-pieces painted by McCafferty and Barry, enabled us to produce the piece in a very handsome manner. New dresses of Oriental costume were made, and those of the ladies were resplendent with gold-foil and spangles. All this flimsy folly was very antagonistic to my feelings; but a man can be driven to many desperate and repulsive acts when no other means will afford him bread. *Necessitas non habet legem.*

"Cherry and Fair Star" was produced, with the following cast of the characters, on Saturday, 12th of September, 1829: *Cherry*, Mrs. McClure; *Sanguinbeck*, Mr. Parsons; *Topack*, McCafferty; *Hassanbad*, Jackson; *Giaffier*, Cambridge; *Fair*

Star, Miss Dunham; *Aviaryana*, Mrs. Jackson; *Papillo*, Miss Rowe. Other characters unimportant, and not worth recording. This piece pleased the people very much, and had a run of eight nights; but the receipts did not average equal to those of "Paul Jones," although its production cost more money. On the 25th of September I had performed for the first time in that city "Paris and London," in which was represented a trip across the British Channel from England to France; here our "sea-cloth" came into play again. The following was the cast of the principal characters: *Volatile*, Mr. Barry; *Frisac*, McCafferty; *Thomas Trot*, Mr. Watson; *Froth*, Ludlow; *Gobble*, Duncan; *Lady Volatile*, Miss Dunham; *Coralie*, Mrs. Jackson; *Sally Trot*, Mrs. Edstrum; *Rose*, Miss Rowe. This piece brought us two or three tolerably good houses only.

I then tried the plays of the "Bride of Abydos," "Floating Beacon," "Tom and Jerry," and other popular pieces then being performed in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia. But all in vain, — nothing would do; no attraction could bring together a succession of full houses in a city where many persons were afraid to go to a theatre, lest they should be "talked about" by those who were members of churches where the clergy were continually consigning *actors* and those who supported them to the *infernal regions*.

Among the pieces produced by me in this theatre towards the close of the season were the "Æthiophe:" *Haroun Alraschid* (the Æthiop), N. M. Ludlow; *Almanzor*, C. B. Parsons; Diamond's "Foundling of the Forest:" *De Valmont*, Mr. Parsons; *Florian*, McClure; *L'Eclair*, Ludlow; *Eugenia*, Mrs. Ludlow; *Geraldine*, Miss Dunham; *Rosabelle*, Mrs. McClure; *Monica*, Mrs. Edstrum; the melodrama of the "Forest of Rosenwald:" *Robert*, Ludlow.

About the last week of the season a Mr. James Howard, a vocalist, made his appearance in the West. He was an English actor, formerly of the Brighton Theatre; first appeared in America in 1818; had recently played (1828) an engagement at the Park Theatre, New York. He opened with us in "Guy Mannering," cast as follows: *Henry Bertram*, Mr. J. Howard; *Col. Mannering*, Mr. Barry; *Dominie Sampson*, Mr. Ludlow; *Dandie Dinmont*, Mr. C. B. Parsons; *Julia Mannering*, Miss Dunham; *Lucy Bertram*, Mrs. McClure; *Meg Merrilies*, Mrs. Ludlow. Mr. Howard had a very pleasant and sweet voice. The piece was well received. Mr. Howard next appeared in the romantic drama of "Rob Roy:" *Francis Osbaldistone*, Mr. J. Howard; *Rashleigh Osbaldistone*,

Mr. C. B. Parsons; *Rob Roy*, N. M. Ludlow; *Nicol Jarvie*, McCafferty; *Helen McGregor*, Mrs. Ludlow; *Diana Vernon*, Miss Dunham; *Jane McAlpine*, Mrs. Edstrum. His next performance was in the operatic drama of the "Devil's Bridge:" *Count Belino*, Mr. J. Howard; next the opera of "Rosina, or the Reapers," founded on the Biblical relation of Ruth and Boaz: *Mr. Belville*, Mr. J. Howard; *Rosina*, Miss E. Petrie; *Phœbe*, Mrs. Ludlow; *Dorcas*, Mrs. Edstrum. "Guy Mannering" was repeated for one night, and on Mr. Howard's benefit-night was played as a first piece "Catharine and Petruchio," in three acts, from "Taming a Shrew," by Shakespeare: *Petruchio*, N. M. Ludlow; *Catharine*, Mrs. Ludlow; concluding with a repetition of the "Devil's Bridge." During the nights of Mr. Howard the receipts of the theatre were a little bettered, but after paying that gentleman there was but little left for the management. The most profitable piece of this season, because costing the least, was the interesting melodrama of "The Forest of Bondy," or "The Dog of Montargis;" and the attraction of the drama was my good dog Nero, already mentioned in this narrative.

The time was drawing near for me to close my season in Cincinnati, having been there over two months, during which time there had been no opposition in the way of amusement; but now the Columbia Street Theatre was about to be opened, under the management of Mr. Drake, and Mr. and Mrs. John Sloman were about to make their appearance there. These performers, of English growth, were novelties in the West, and a desirable reputation had preceded them from the East. Mr. John Sloman was a London Jew, but now a convert from Judaism; his real name was said to be Solomon, but that he dropped the first *o* when he turned Christian. He was popular in the minor theatres of London as a comic singer between play and farce, yet at times he did some acting, and was funny in certain characters, such as *Sam Savory*, in the farce of "Fish Out of Water;" but his comic songs, such as "Sweet Kitty Clover," "Major Longbow," and "Betsy Baker," were his attractive efforts. Mrs. Sloman was considered a good tragedy actress for her day, and in such characters as *Mrs. Haller*, in the "Stranger," *Mrs. Beverly*, in the "Gamester," and *Belvidera*, in "Venice Preserved," I have seen no lady perform them better, that I can now remember. She commenced in Cincinnati, I believe, with "Isabella, or the Fatal Marriage," in which she appeared as *Isabella*. I did not see the performance, but heard it well spoken of. After playing many years in England and America, Mr. Slo-

man established his family residence in Charleston, South Carolina, where, in January, 1858, Mrs. Sloman died. They had a daughter, Miss Jane Sloman, who was said to possess considerable talent as a pianist, some years ago, but I have seen no account of her lately.

Finding that my *bipeds* could not fill the treasury, I had recourse once more to the *quadruped*, my never-failing dog Nero. I had found him hitherto a "sure card," and he did not disappoint me now. I let the Slomans have their first night all to themselves, and closed my house ostensibly and really for a night rehearsal of the "Dog of Montargis;" and on their second night I came out with my drama, having a wood-cut picture on the posters representing the dog in the act of choking to death *Macaire*, the villain of the piece. It had the anticipated effect; my theatre was filled, and the other comparatively deserted. During the performance of the piece that preceded the drama, Mr. Alexander Drake, bringing Mr. Sloman with him, came in behind the scenes and introduced Mr. Sloman to me, who was anxious to see the dog; and caressing him, remarked, "What a misfortune it would be if the animal should fall sick, or any accident happen to him." However, Nero went through his work, as he had done in other theatres, to the most rapturous applause, and the house was well filled for five or six nights; while the Slomans, much chagrined, were playing to comparatively empty benches.

About two or three days after the night of the first production of the "Dog of Montargis," I began to prepare to take my leave of Cincinnati and return to Louisville. We put up a few names for benefits, some of which were pretty well attended, — Mr. Parsons', Mrs. Ludlow's, Miss Dunham's, Mrs. McClure's, and my own. A young man named Foster, known among actors as "Bully" Foster, came along and offered to play for my benefit. As he was a favorite with the Cincinnatians, I put up "Julius Cæsar." He played *Mark Antony*; *Brutus*, Parsons; *Cassius*, Ludlow; *Julius Cæsar*, Jackson; and thus closed the Cincinnati season of 1829.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Louisville Theatre reopens—Biography of C. B. Parsons—Thomas S. Hamblin—Biography—Old Joe Cowell—Miss Dunham—Robert L. Place—Old Joe Cowell's Biography—John Still, the Vocalist—Sam Cowell, Son of Joe—Mrs. Bateman.

ON MONDAY, October 5, 1829, I began my second managerial effort in Louisville, in the temporary building put up by me the June previous. We opened with the comedy, "A Cure for the Heartache:" *Young Rapid*, N. M. Ludlow; *Old Rapid*, Duncan; *Vortex*, Jackson; *Frank Oatland*, Watson; *Miss Vortex*, Miss Dunham; *Ellen Vortex*, Mrs. Jackson; *Jessie Oatland*, Mrs. Ludlow.

At the close of the season Mr. Parsons left me, and also Mr. and Mrs. Edstrum; and a Mr. Kidd and a Mr. Woolford joined the company, which then consisted of N. M. Ludlow, A. W. Jackson, J. E. Watson, H. N. Barry, W. McCafferty, E. L. Duncan, C. F. McClure, — Cambridge, A. Egbert, J. Scott, H. Woolford, Mrs. Ludlow, Mrs. McClure, Mrs. Jackson, Miss Dunham, Miss Rowe, and Miss Petrie, — ten males and six females.

As this is probaby the most favorable place I shall have, I wish to say something more in regard to a person who left my company about this time, and who afterwards became somewhat noted in another sphere of life. I refer to Mr. Charles B. Parsons. The *Dramatic Mirror* of 1842 says that this gentleman was born of respectable parents, at Enfield Connecticut, July 23, 1803. His father intended him for the "ministry," but dying ere our hero had attained his fifteenth year, the design was frustrated, and the lad came to New York, where he imbibed a passion for the stage, and took part in some amateur performances. The other portion of the *Mirror's* account is not reliable. I have previously spoken of having engaged Mr. Parsons as a *novice* in 1828, his going with me to Mobile, and continuing with me up to the close of my season in Cincinnati in the fall of 1829. When Mr. Parsons left my company, or shortly after, he was engaged with Samuel Drake, Sr., in his circuit of Kentucky theatres. He was at one time stage and business manager for Mr. Drake.

It was about this time that he married Miss Oldham, daughter of an old resident of Louisville. In August, 1838, Mr. Parsons appeared at the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, in N. H. Bannister's tragedy of "Caius Silius," personating the title character. On the 1st of September he performed *Roaring Ralph Stackpole*, in "Nick of the Woods," in which he acquired some popularity. In November, 1838, he was acting manager for F. C. Wemyss, of Pittsburg, and filled the same situation for Mr. Wemyss at Baltimore in December following, where it appears he did not give satisfaction to that gentleman, as I conclude from a paragraph which I here copy from Mr. Wemyss's book of "Twenty-six Years of the Life of an Actor and Manager," published in 1847. He says, speaking of the time referred to: "Parsons, who was the acting and stage-manager, at a salary of fifty dollars per week, was studying theology in the theatre, neglecting his business, and caring about nothing but receiving his money from the treasury, in which he was punctuality personified. I gladly cancelled his engagement, and have never met him since. In the pulpit his labors may be more successful; but from his career—his sudden return to the stage—I fear the love of notoriety, not religion, is the guiding principle."

In regard to the foregoing remarks of Mr. Wemyss, they should be taken *cum grano salis*. Mr. Wemyss was one of those English gentlemen ever ready to find fault with Americans and American customs and forms in society and business. I think it but justice to Mr. Parsons to say I have always understood that his reasons for withdrawing from the Methodist Church, after having joined it and being permitted to lecture from the pulpit, was an objection from some narrow-minded members on account of his having been an *actor*. Whether this be true or not, he *did* withdraw for awhile; but after studying, and becoming better qualified, he was regularly ordained to the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and continued one of its prominent clergymen to the day of his death. I heard him preach in St. Louis in 1855, and I thought the sermon an excellent one, beautifully illustrated in two or three instances by quotations from the immortal "bard of Avon,"—without naming him, though. In describing the "day of judgment," he quoted from Shakespeare's "Tempest" the following passage:—

"The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve," etc.

I thought his style of delivery, though, was a trifle too *stagey* for the *pulpit*. In fact he was an *actor* when a preacher, and a *preacher* when actor. Mr. Parsons died at his family residence at Portland, near Louisville, December 8, 1871, aged sixty-eight years, leaving a family of grown-up children and their mother.

Our first night's performance was very well attended, and passed off with satisfaction to audience and actors. On the second night the comedy of "Laugh when You Can" was performed, which was followed by the farce of "Mr. H——, or Beware of a Bad Name!" This night was not quite as good as the previous one. I then put up Mr. Howard's name for four or five nights in operatic pieces, as "Rob Roy," "Guy Mannering," "Devil's Bridge," and others. His singing gave satisfaction to many persons, but the press found fault with his voice, saying it was "not what it had been," and all such remarks, calculated to injure the receipts of the theatre and the feelings of the actor, without being of the least benefit to the public.

About the time Mr. Howard was concluding his few nights, Mr. Thomas S. Hamblin came along, being, I believe, his first and only visit to the far West. I engaged Mr. Hamblin for six nights and a benefit on the seventh, being compelled to give him one-half of each night's receipts or do without him.

I was ambitious to give the people of Louisville an opportunity to see all supposed talent that came that way, and therefore I yielded to Mr. Hamblin's extravagant terms. He commenced on Monday, October 19th, with Knowles's tragedy of "Virginius:" *Virginius*, Mr. Hamblin. There was a full house, but the theatre would not hold much, and the prices were low, — seventy-five and fifty cents entrance. The audience were to all appearance highly gratified. The next night was enacted Knowles's play of "William Tell:" *William Tell*, Mr. Hamblin. This play was well acted, and went off with great applause. Miss Rowe, in *Albert*, the son, was much applauded; and Mr. Hamblin appeared to more advantage than in any other character he acted during the engagement. The third night we performed "The Merchant of Venice:" *Shylock*, Mr. Hamblin; *Gratiano*, Ludlow. The fourth night, "Damon and Pythias:" *Damon*, Mr. Hamblin; *Pythias*, Ludlow. Fifth night, "Hamlet:" *Hamlet*, Mr. Hamblin; *Ghost*, Ludlow. Sixth night, "Richard III.;" *Richard III.*, Mr. Hamblin; *Richmond*, Ludlow. Seventh night, and his benefit, "Julius Cæsar:" *Mark Antony*, Mr. Hamblin;

Brutus, Barry ; *Cassius*, Ludlow. The last night the house was crammed full, and yet the receipts amounted to little over three hundred dollars. This sum, at the prices of seventy-five cents for the best seats and fifty for the rest, would have required four hundred persons to have been in the house on that night.

I mention the receipts of this night for the reason that one Joseph Cowell, an Englishman and a low comedian, at one time of some notoriety in the Eastern theatres, put forth a book, in 1844, of his theatrical experience ; and in referring to his trip to the West in 1829, speaks of this theatre, in which he performed a few nights, and of the company performing in it, in the most contemptuous terms, calling the building a "cattle-shed," or "stable," and saying it would only hold "about two hundred persons." This, like his estimate of the company, was guided more by disappointed expectations and prejudice than by fairness or generous feelings.

This building was truly a poor, temporary affair, but neither that nor the actors were so contemptible as Mr. Cowell has represented them. However, as far as I am individually concerned, I forgive him the slight thrown indirectly upon my efforts as an *actor*, in consideration of the good character he gives me as a manager.

As I shall not have occasion to speak of Mr. Hamblin again, and as he figured largely in the Drama of the United States, it may be agreeable to my readers to learn something more of him. This gentleman arrived in America in 1825, and first appeared in *Hamlet*, at the Park Theatre, New York. He was born in London, England, in 1798 ; was intended for a mercantile life, and made his first appearance on the stage at the Adelphi Theatre, London, as a ballet-dancer. In 1817 he was engaged at Drury Lane Theatre to play subordinate characters, and very early in life married the daughter of Mr. Blanchard, a London comedian, and she came with him to the United States. In 1830 Mr. Hamblin, in connection with Mr. James H. Hackett, became lessee of the Bowery Theatre, New York, and at a later period was its sole manager. In 1836 Mr. H. returned to England, where he played at Covent Garden, but with little success. In 1847 he obtained the Bowery Theatre again ; and in 1848, after Mr. Simpson resigned and retired from the Park, Mr. H. tried the management of that establishment, which he fitted up with great splendor ; but to no avail. The class of citizens that were in the habit of visiting that time-honored establishment would not recognize Mr. Hamblin or his company as giving them

what they desired, and the result was a great loss to Mr. H., the building soon after burning down, and without one dollar's value of insurance on the interest of Mr. Hamblin. He for many years labored under an asthmatic affection, which materially interfered with his professional success. In business he was said to be strictly honorable; his generosity and benevolence were well known to his intimate friends; yet with all this, and heavy losses by fire, he was enabled to leave his widow (his second wife) about one thousand dollars. He died of brain fever, at his residence in New York, January 8, 1853.

Mr. Hamblin, at the conclusion of his engagement, expressed himself as being well satisfied with the result, and also spoke in complimentary terms of the support that had been afforded him by several members of the company; particularly was he pleased with the promising talents of Mrs. McClure. In fact, his knowledge of her capabilities as an actress, appearing to him as they did at that time, was the cause of her obtaining an engagement in his theatre in New York as a "leading lady," about three years after, when she appeared as *Elvira*, in the play of "Pizarro," to Mr. Hamblin's *Rolla*. Of some of the others I will speak here, for reasons which I will give shortly after. Miss Dunham, who performed *Virginia* with him, he spoke of in the most exalted terms, — of her youth and beauty, and her correct and distinct utterance of the words, — and prophesied she would one day be a great ornament to the stage. This, probably, she would have been, had she not withdrawn from it the following spring, marrying, and seeking seclusion in the home circle. Mrs. Jackson was a twin-sister of Miss Dunham, and a splendid-looking woman, but had not as much promise of talent for the stage, yet her personal appearance made her a favorite with the public. Miss Rowe, as Mrs. Watson, was a favorite actress for a number of years in the West and South, and a year or so after the death of Mr. Watson she married a Col. Dodge, of Vicksburg, Mississippi, and retired from the stage. Miss Eliza Petrie, although a young beginner at that time, was a healthy, good-looking young lady, with a sweet though not powerful voice as a singer; but in small theatres this was not a perceptible deficiency, and her musical abilities made her a favorite with the audience in almost any character intrusted to her. A few years later she became a clever actress in singing farce parts, as *Gertrude*, in the "Loan of a Lover;" *Lisette*, in the "Swiss Cottage," and parts of that character. She married a Mr. Robert L. Place, at one time manager for

a season or two of the "American Theatre," New Orleans; he died shortly after, and she went East, taking up her residence in Philadelphia, where she died. Mr. A. W. Jackson was an actor of respectable talent in heavy tragedy villains, to which nature seemed to have adapted him in a peculiar degree. He left me at the end of the season, appeared afterwards on the stage of several Eastern theatres, and in 1845 became proprietor and manager of the Bowery Theatre, New York, where he made a fortune in two years, and finally retired on it, to die in his own house in New York, in May, 1866. There are others of this company I could speak of favorably, and justly, but I forbear lest I become tedious. Of myself and wife I say nothing; I leave it to those who may remember us, to say what we were worth as actors.

Immediately following Mr. Hamblin came Mr. Joseph Cowell, who, according to his own account, was born at Torbay, a small town on the east coast of Devonshire, England, on the 7th of August, 1792. Mr. Ireland, in his "New York Stage," had it that he was born in Kent; but my account is from a pamphlet published by Cowell in 1844, where I read it as stated by me above. He first appeared upon the stage on the 23d of January, 1812, at Plymouth Dock, a seaport in Devonshire, at the head of Plymouth Sound; the character selected by him was *Belcour*, in the comedy of the "West Indian," a genteel comedy part. His first appearance in America was at the Park Theatre, New York, on the 30th of October, 1821, as *L'Eclair*, in Diamond's play of the "Foundling of the Forest." In 1823 he became acting manager, for Messrs. Price & Simpson, of an equestrian company performing at the Broadway Circus. In 1837, he, conjointly with Mr. J. J. Adams, opened a small place in a building near Fulton Street, New York, which they called the "City Theatre." After playing in the different theatres of the United States, East, West, and South, he returned to England in company with his grand-daughter, Miss Bateman, and died in London, November 14, 1863, aged seventy-one.

At the time of Mr. Cowell's arrival in Louisville, Kentucky, he had but recently left Philadelphia, and was making his first trip to the West and South, having just been performing a few nights in Cincinnati with the company of Mr. Drake, then under the direction of his son, Alexander Drake. Mr. C. having understood from Mr. Hamblin, who was yet in Louisville when C. arrived, the terms he (Mr. H.) had obtained of me for his engagement, was modest enough to demand the same, viz., "one-half of each night's receipts." This, I concluded,

it would not do for me to agree to give him ; however, after some chaffering between us, we came to these terms, I believe (as he states in his book) : he to have forty per cent of the receipts, after a nightly deduction of \$100, and two benefits, — on which occasions he got half the gross receipts, — one for his own name and one for his little son “ Sam,” who was with him, and who sang comic songs between the pieces, and played one or two nights in the same pieces with his father, whom he purposely (and laughably) copied. Indeed, “ Sam ” was the *real* attraction ; not that his father was not considered a good comedian, yet they had seen as good before his appearance ; but “ Sam ” was astonishingly clever for a lad probably not more than nine years of age. Mr. Cowell commenced on Monday, November 2, 1829, with the comedy of “ Paul Pry,” playing the title role himself, after which his little son, Sam Cowell, sang a comic song. What it was I cannot say, but it pleased the audience very much ; he was called back to sing it again, which he did. The rendering of the song so cleverly, and by so small a boy, created such warm and lively sensations that many of the auditors threw on the stage to him pieces of silver coin to the amount of five or six dollars. This evening’s performance concluded with the farce of the “ Promissory Note : ” *Scamper*, N. M. Ludlow. Second night, November 4th, a small drama called the “ May Queen : ” *Caleb Pipkin* (an itinerant tinker), Mr. Cowell, in which he was excessively funny. I remember having a hearty laugh, as I was standing behind the scenes looking at his acting, and particularly at an unexpected incident that occurred, and the introduction made by Cowell at the time. My two sons, Richard and Frank, — the first then three years old, the other sixteen months, — were put on the stage in ragged clothes, with smeared faces, as the tinker’s two children, that went around with him ; while the father was mending an old kettle, the two boys were amusing themselves with the tools. Frank, the smaller one, had got an old stew-pan that the other wished to get from him ; a struggle ensued, and the smaller one hit his brother over the head with the pan. This attracted Cowell’s attention, when he introduced, in a solemn, comic way, the following : “ Ah, boys, boys ; you forget what I have so often read to you from your primer : —

“ Dear children, never let your angry passions rise.

Those little hands were never made to tear each other’s eyes ! ”

The effect was electric. The audience roared with laughter, in which the actors all joined, the utterance of it was so full of the serio-comic.

The third night of Mr. Cowell was on Friday, November 6th, when was performed his "crack part," as the actors used to call it, in the operatic farce of the "Turnpike Gate," the character of *Crack*, by Mr. Cowell. In this part he was never, in all probability, equalled. About this time Mr. John Still, a singing gentleman, came along, was engaged by me, and appeared this night in the character of *Henry Blunt*, "with songs." The performance of this evening concluded with the opera of "Rosina, or The Reapers:" *Mr. Bellville*, Mr. Still; *Rosina*, Miss Petrie. Between the two pieces Sam Cowell appeared and sang two of his comic songs, and was greeted with a shower of silver and gold coin. Mr. Still was a quiet, gentlemanly man, with a sweet voice, although not very powerful, yet quite enough so for the small theatres then in the Western towns. He had been with me at the Chatham Theatre, New York, in 1828, and was engaged in the same company with me in New Orleans the season of 1830-31, when Mr. Cowell was also engaged there. Mr. Cowell's fourth night was a comic drama entitled, "A Chip of the Old Block." This brought out Sam as an actor, he personating *Chip*, which he played closely mimicking his father's style of acting, at the same time bearing so perfect a resemblance to him, in little, that no one would doubt for a moment he *was* a "chip of the old block." Mr. Cowell enacted in the piece the character of *Andrew Forrester*. After this piece Mr. Still appeared and sang one of the favorite love-songs of the day, and then Sam came forward with one of his comic songs, which closed with another and heavier metallic shower than had yet greeted the boy. Everybody was delighted with his cleverness. The fifth night was put up for Sam's benefit, when was performed for the first piece the "Honest Thieves:" *Abel Day*, Mr. Cowell; *Teague*, N. M. Ludlow. This was followed with a song by Mr. Still; after which the farce of "The £100 Note," with *two Billy Blacks*, by the Cowells, father and son, personating scenes of the piece alternately, — one popping on the stage when the other went off. It was outrageously absurd and unprecedented, but was funny, nevertheless, and the audience seemed to enjoy the jokes and conundrums of each. The piece closed pleasantly. As the curtain was about to fall at the ending of the piece, Sam rushed on down to the footlights, saying to the audience, "Why is this farce like a stick of candy? Do you give it up? Because, it's a sweet thing, and you've had the short and the long of it," pointing first to himself and then to his father. I need hardly say the house was convulsed with laughter, and the performers standing in

the rear of Sam were compelled to make a quick retreat behind the scenes, to avoid the pieces of coin that were pitched and hurled on the stage from all parts of the house. Among them were gold pieces, which of themselves amounted to \$35. The generous Kentuckians were delighted with the boy. Poor Sam! I loved that boy! When he grew up to manhood he went to England, and frittered away his genius in singing in halls and saloons, and died early in life; but marrying first, and leaving behind him at his death children, one of whom I saw about 1871 or 1872 with Mr. Wyndham's company in St. Louis, — Miss Sidney Cowell, — and a very clever actress she was; English clever, I mean, — Yankees call it "smart," — neither being the proper word to use, but I give it as conventionally understood. This young lady was, I presume, named after her aunt, Mrs. Bateman, whose maiden name was Sidney Cowell, and who was a member of the company of Ludlow & Smith.

The sixth and last night of Mr. Cowell's engagement was his benefit, when was acted "The Hotel, or The Servant with Two Masters:" *Lazarillo*, Mr. Cowell; *Donna Clara*, Miss Dunham. After which, songs by Mr. Still, and comic songs by Sam Cowell; the night's entertainment concluding with a repetition of the "Turnpike Gate." The house was well filled, and Sam got his usual contributions in small change. This closed the engagement of Mr. Cowell in Louisville; and he says in his book: "We played to crowded houses," leaving the impression that he was well paid for his six nights' engagement.

Now, I ask any reasonable person to say, after reading what I have stated in relation to the engagements of Mr. Hamblin and Mr. Cowell, and the performers who played with them, if it is likely Mr. Cowell, whose engagement immediately followed that of Mr. Hamblin, could be justified in making the following remarks, which he has put in a pamphlet of his, published in 1844: "At Cincinnati I thought it was as wretched a specimen as it well could be anywhere (speaking of Mr. Drake's company and theatre), but there it was really a theatre, and the company composed of much inexperienced talent; but here [Louisville] there was not one redeeming point. Who they all were, or what became of them, heaven only knows. I don't remember to have met with any of them since, with the exception of the manager and his lady." Now, the above was written in 1842, and published by Mr. Cowell in 1844; and in 1830-31, about a year after this visit to Louisville, he not only met me and my wife in New Orleans, but

Mr. and Mrs. McClure and Mr. Still, who were all members of Mr. Caldwell's company with him in the last-mentioned years. Mrs. McClure appeared in Philadelphia in the fall of 1831, and again in 1832, when Mr. William B. Wood, an old actor and manager, in his book, says "she was said to be the best actress then on the stage in the East." In March, 1833, she appeared at the Park Theatre, New York, and was well received; in the month following, at the Bowery, New York, as *Elvira*, in "Pizarro," to Mr. Hamblin's *Rolla*, where she was engaged by Mr. Hamblin as his leading lady. Now, Mr. Cowell was in the Eastern theatres during those years, and must have heard of, if he did not meet Mrs. McClure. Again, in 1838-9, Mr. Cowell was a member of the company of Ludlow & Smith in St. Louis and Mobile, where Miss Petrie was playing *Cinderella*, doing all the principal singing business and some of the comedy ladies of the first class, Mr. Cowell playing in the same pieces with her; and yet in 1842 he says, "What became of them, heaven only knows." I fancy my long-time brother actor Cowell, when he wrote about this season and the company, must have done it between dinner and bed-time, when it was no unusual occurrence for his mind and vision to become warped or "sprung," and then he was "nothing if not critical," and not much then. The fact is, Mr. Cowell was a disappointed man. He came to the United States, and particularly the West and South, supposing he was going to carry every thing before him as a low comedy man; but unfortunately for him there were several comedians who had been seen in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia; that the people were persuaded in their own minds were quite as funny as Mr. Cowell, and this was true likewise in some portions of the West and South; and especially was it so in Louisville, where they had seen Aleck Drake and Frank Blissett. These men were well known to the Kentuckians, and highly esteemed, not only as actors, but as gentlemen. I've seen no better comedians since their time; and Mr. Wood, the old Philadelphia manager, bears testimony to that effect in regard to the latter gentleman, in his "Recollections of the Stage." At page 90 of his pamphlet, Mr. Cowell makes a statement to this effect: that in 1837-8, Ludlow & Smith, as a firm, took the paper currency of the country only at specie value, where the paper was at large discount, and then paid it out at *par*, or as indicated on the face of the paper, by which they made great profits. Now, this was simply and unqualifiedly an *untruth*. But old Joe was not particular about what

he said when he took a dislike to any one. He was never known to say a pleasant word about any person beyond his own family, unless he thought there was a chance of making something off of him, and then, when he found such a one, he was the greatest *toady* in the world.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Ned Raymond — Mr. Palmer — Mme. Celeste — Biographies of the Drake Family — Death of Mrs. A. Drake — Company Play in Cincinnati — Henry J. Finn — Harris Pearson — Herr Cline — The Company proceed to Pittsburg — Temporary Theatre at Mobile Burnt — The Author engages with Mr. Caldwell — Mr. Pelby in New Orleans — Sketch of Pelby — Thomas A. Cooper — Pathetic Scene in "Henry VIII." — Cooper's *Fulstaff*.

SHORTLY after the departure of Mr. Cowell, Mr. Edward Raymond played a few nights with us. This was the same young man who performed a few nights, in the fall of 1828, at the Chatham Theatre, New York City, under the management of Cooper & Ludlow. Mr. Raymond opened on Monday, 16th of November, in "William Tell," playing the part of *Tell*. He was well received, although Mr. Hamblin had played the character only a few weeks before him. His second play was John Howard Payne's tragedy of "Brutus, or The Fall of Tarquin:" *Lucius Junius Brutus*, Mr. Raymond; *Sextus*, Mr. Palmer. (This gentleman had just been engaged.) On the third night was performed "Pizarro:" *Rolla*, Mr. Raymond. On the fourth night, the romantic drama of "Rob Roy," being for the benefit and last night of Mr. Raymond, who enacted the character of *Rob Roy*. This young gentleman did not draw very well because he had not acquired a reputation, and had not the English seal or even the New York stamp on him yet, — a matter of vast importance in those days, and even at this day it seems necessary to success. He was said to belong to a very good family, and that Raymond was not his real name. He performed at the Bowery Theatre, New York, in 1832, and, poor young man! shortly after was found drowned, supposed to have committed suicide.

Immediately following the engagement of Mr. Raymond came that of Mdle. Celeste, the most gifted lady, in her peculiar line of stage performances, that to this day has been in these United States. She was but new to the country then, and, in conjunction with her sister Constance, was making a first professional tour through the South. Her *repertoire* was then quite limited as regarded the English stage, consisting principally of dances, with one or two pantomime per-

formances. In fact, the only acting she did while performing with me in Louisville was *Myrtillo*, the dumb boy, in the small drama called the "Broken Sword." This dumb boy does not speak until the closing scene of the piece, and then only five words: "The murderer of my father!" At the time of this performance, Mdlle. Celeste's capability of pronouncing the English language was very imperfect, and I was very much amused at her attempt in that way when she acted the character of *Myrtillo*. In order to understand the matter, it will be necessary for me to relate that the father of the boy, who is called *Count Luneda*, had been murdered in his carriage, while performing a short journey. The only witness to this deed of blood was his young son, *Myrtillo*, then quite small, and who was so wrought upon by the horrors of the scene as to become dumb. This boy, grown to manhood, encounters the murderer of his father in the person of *Colonel Rigolio*, whom he instantly clutches by the throat. A struggle ensues, and the youth in his excitement recovers his speech, exclaiming, "The murderer of my father!" These five words were too much English at one time for Celeste; so when she seized the destroyer of her father, she exclaimed, in the wildest manner, "Murder *mon pere!*" The effect was so comic that the curtain usually descended amid a general laugh. But she finally conquered the difficulty, and was then never equalled by any one in the character, that I ever saw. This lady performed with us, I think, five nights, the fifth one being her benefit. During those nights she did some very admirable dancing, that quite surprised the Louisville people, especially those that had not witnessed any *French* dancing; yet it was rather repulsive to the staid ladies who had not been in the habit of seeing females kick up their heels quite so high in their dancing. But the daughters have got bravely over this fastidiousness of their mammas.

As to the four following months of my theatrical career, I shall pass over them very briefly. They possess nothing of interest to the general reader, and a retrospect of them would be otherwise than pleasant to myself, inasmuch as they were marked by ill-success and disappointment. The weather soon became too cold to be endurable, even with all the appliances for heating that we could find. It was only occasionally that we had a performance, when the weather would permit, and even then each one was indifferently attended. As I shall not have occasion to speak of the Drake family hereafter, except Mrs. Alexander Drake, I will give

here short sketches of them, as the reader will probably desire to know more of these persons, who were so prominent in the early drama of the West.

Samuel Drake, Sr., was born in England, November 15, 1768. I once heard an old English actress say that his real name was Samuel Drake Bryant, and that he dropped the Bryant on joining the stage. It was said he had been bound an apprentice to learn the printing business, but that he ran away before his time was out, and turned actor. Previous to his coming to the United States he was an actor and manager of some country theatres in the west of England. He married in that country a Miss Fisher, member of a theatrical family of that name, one of her brothers having been a manager, I believe, of a theatre in the city of Exeter, England. This lady came with her husband to the United States in 1810, landing in Boston, where they remained until 1813, when they joined the company of old John Bernard at Albany, New York, where Mr. Drake was stage-manager. Mrs. Drake died in Albany, in 1814, and in the spring of 1815 Mr. Drake and his family started for Kentucky, he having made arrangements for the occupancy of Frankfort, Lexington, and Louisville as a theatrical circuit. Mr. Drake was quite successful during the first ten or twelve years of his Kentucky career, and during that time bought the building in Frankfort of which the theatre was a portion, and had the precaution to buy a small farm in Oldham County, Kentucky, about twelve miles above Louisville, to which he intended, and did retire in his old age, and where he died, October 16, 1854, aged eighty-six years. This farm, I believe, is now the property of his grandson, who was named after him, and who, I understand, took up his residence there. Mr. Drake had at one time living five children, and a sixth that I heard of, but never saw. One of his daughters, Julia, was the mother of Julia Dean Hayne, that well-known and favorite young actress, who a few years since passed to a premature grave, deeply regretted. Of the persons composing the first regular company that occupied the stage of Kentucky, under the management of Samuel Drake, Sr., all are dead, except the one who makes this record.

Samuel Drake, Jr., eldest son of the before-mentioned, was born in England, in 1796, and came to the United States with his father. It was intended that he should be a musician, and to this end his father had him educated as a violin-player. When I became acquainted with him, which was in the winter of 1814, he was then a second violin-player in the orchestra of the Albany Theatre, under the leadership of the celebrated

Monsieur Mallet. I say *celebrated*, for he became so in time, being the *original* on which Mr. Baile Bernard formed his petit drama entitled "Monsieur Mallet." Samuel Drake was a very handsome young man, and had an ambition beyond "cat-gut;" so when his father had concluded to go to Kentucky, the son begged to be permitted to make a step or two higher in the profession, as he thought, and so he stepped from the orchestra on to the stage. I remember seeing him perform for the first time, making his appearance in *Edmund*, in "King Lear," when Mr. Holman and daughter enacted *Lear* and *Cordelia*, and his effort was considered to be a very fair one for a young actor. During the peregrinations of his father's company westward, he performed in almost every piece acted; and when not thus employed, officiated as leader of the orchestra, in which he was very efficient,—indeed, indispensable,—for leaders were not often to be found in country towns. "Sam Drake," as he was familiarly called, was a very generous and kind-hearted young man, and being of a social nature, and a pleasant, convivial companion, he soon fell into the company of men fond of high living and it did not take long to make him one of the same. So, like most men of that description, he had a short life; and some foolish ones might call it a "merry one." He died at Cincinnati, July 24, 1826, aged thirty years.

Alexander Drake, the second son of Samuel Drake, Sr., was born in England, 1798, and came with his father to Boston in 1811. His first appearance on the stage was in Boston, when he was not thirteen years of age, as the *Prince of Wales*, in "Richard III." He also journeyed with his father to Kentucky, of which I have already given an account. His business on the stage became that of a low comedian; and in his peculiar line, "country boys," and singing low comedy, few have surpassed him in the United States. He was an immense favorite in Kentucky, Cincinnati, and Pittsburg for many years. About 1822 or 1823 he married Miss Frances Ann Denny, a young lady who had started from Albany as a novice in his father's company, and who remained in it until she had become quite a clever actress.

"Alec Drake," a name familiar and beloved by all who knew the man, passed to that "unknown country," while yet a young man, February 10, 1830, aged thirty-two years, leaving behind him four children, three sons and one daughter. Two of the sons are yet living, — Col. A. E. Drake, of the United States army, and Samuel Drake, a retired actor, living on the farm left him by his grandfather. His second son,

Richard Drake, was killed at the battle of Monterey, Mexico. Julia, the daughter, now the widow of Harry Chapman, an actor, is the mother of the "Chapman Sisters."

James Drake, the third son of the old manager, was designed by his father to become a lawyer, but he was more fond of poetry than law, and never became prominent in his profession of the law. He was a very handsome man, and early in life he married a young lady connected with one of the best families of Kentucky. He also was born in England, in 1802, and died in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1852, aged fifty years. I am not aware whether he left any children.

Martha Drake was the eldest of Mr. Drake's children, and like the rest, was born in England; came to Kentucky with her father; was not much of an actress; and soon after reaching Kentucky Miss Drake became Mrs. Duckham, she marrying an Englishman of that name. Whether there were any little Duckhams, I have never learned. On her marriage she withdrew from the stage, and I heard that in after years she and her husband returned to England, where she died.

Julia Drake, a sister of the above, and much younger, was the bright particular star of the family. She was very beautiful and full of talent, and if she had been reared on the stage of any one of our principal Eastern city theatres, would have left behind at her death as great if not a greater name than that of her highly gifted daughter, Julia Dean. Julia Drake, in face and figure, was a perfect specimen of the ancient Italian beauty, — dark hair and long, dark eyelashes; her eyes had a peculiarly happy, lively expression. She was a great favorite in all the Western theatres, and had appeared with applause in New York and Philadelphia. Soon after her talent as an actress began to show its excellence, she married a young merchant of Cincinnati named Fosdick, and retired from the stage. Mr. Fosdick died a few years after their marriage, and then Mrs. Fosdick returned to the stage again, in her father's theatre. A few years after she married again, an actor named Edwin Dean.

Julia Drake was also born in England, in 1800, and died November, 1832, in Dutchess County, New York, at the residence of her husband's parents. The line of her profession, in which she excelled, was high comedy. In *Lady Teazle*, and like characters, I have never seen her surpassed; her articulation was musical, full, and joyous. Those who may remember Julia Dean's voice can form some idea of that of her mother, but the face of the mother was more symmetrical and beautiful.

Frances Ann Drake (*nee* Denny), wife of Alexander, second son of the old manager, Samuel Drake, was born in Schenectady, New York State, November 6, 1797. Her family was not wealthy, but they were in comfortable circumstances. While she was quite young, the family changed their residence to Albany, in the same State, where she had an elder sister residing, who was married. My first acquaintance with Miss Denny commenced in quite a romantic way; in 1813, when she was not yet fifteen years of age. The acquaintance was shortly after suspended for about two years, when we did not meet, and it was not until the spring of 1815 we were unexpectedly brought together at the little town of "Cherry Valley," about fifty miles west of Albany, both being engaged as novitiate performers in the dramatic company of Samuel Drake, Sr., bound for Kentucky. Miss Denny's education was confined to the simple rudiments of an old-fashioned village school; but she was an industrious student, and soon made rapid advancement in her profession. It has been recently said, in public print, that Miss Denny made her first appearance on the stage in *Juliet* ("Romeo and Juliet"), but that is a mistake; it was *Julia*, in a petit comedy entitled the "Midnight Hour," at the town of "Cherry Valley," before mentioned. The first character in tragedy that she acted was *Imma*, in M. G. Lewis's play of "Adelgitha," which occurred in the next town we stopped at, called "Cooper's Town," the birthplace of the novelist, Fenimore Cooper.

In the progress of our journey, until we reached Pittsburg, Miss Denny had not acted more than eight or ten different characters, owing to our repeating our pieces in the different towns at which we stopped, and those characters were of a light and not exacting grade. At the above-named city she was called upon for greater exertions, and in meeting them she showed considerable capacity and development of talent, giving satisfaction generally to the manager and her audiences. On reaching Kentucky her progress in the profession became marked and highly encouraging, and it was not long before she became a great favorite. About the year 1819 she left the West, and started to try her fortune in the Northern and Eastern theatres; going first to Canada, and performing at Montreal and Quebec, then to Boston, and thence to New York City, where she made her first appearance April 17, 1820, at the Park Theatre, in the character of *Helen Worret*, in the comedy of "Man and Wife," in which she gave great satisfaction. She then became a regular member of the Park company; and after the burning of that theatre, was with the

same company performing at the Anthony Street Theatre, New York during the season there of 1820-21. In 1823, she married Alexander Drake, according to my recollection; but I never heard of its being a runaway match, as recently stated, nor do I believe it was. In 1824 Mrs. Drake appeared at the Chatham Theatre, as *Imogene*, in the tragedy of "Bertram," to Mr. Pemberton's *Bertram*. Shortly after this she returned to the West with her husband, to his father's theatres, occasionally visiting the East during the vacations of her Western engagements. Her last appearance in New York was in 1835, at the Park Theatre, April 22d, as *Bianca*, the Italian wife, in the tragedy of "Fazio." This was followed by *Evadne*, *Adelgitha*, *Isabella*, *Widow Cheerly*, and *Julia* in the "Hunchback." In an obituary notice of Mrs. Drake, in September, 1875, the writer says: "She created a furor in 1829, in New Orleans, when she was brought out by a rival theatre to the one in which Fanny Kemble, then in the height of her fame, was playing. Mrs. Drake, being then in great popularity in the South, proved the greater attraction." Now, this statement is altogether incorrect; for, in the first place, Miss Fanny Kemble was not in America in 1829, but came for the first time in 1832, and made her first appearance before an American audience at New York, September 18th, of the latter year, at the Park Theatre, in the character of *Bianca*, in the tragedy of "Fazio;" the next night as *Juliet*, in "Romeo and Juliet;" and finally, Miss Kemble never acted in any theatre in *New Orleans* at any time of her life.

Mrs. Drake, after the death of her husband, which occurred in 1830, married a Mr. G. W. Cutter, a man of some literary ability; but the marriage proved an unhappy one, and they separated upon mutual agreement, and she resumed the name of Drake. Mr. Cutter has since died. Mrs. Drake was a woman that read a great deal, and possessing a good memory and considerable taste, was enabled to be very agreeable company for persons of higher acquirements than herself. She possessed also great energy of character, sound judgment, and considerable tact in the management of her affairs and the accomplishment of her purposes. She owned at one time a very handsome residence at Covington (opposite side of the Ohio River from Cincinnati), but the latter years of her life passed in retirement on the farm of her son, in Oldham County, near Louisville, where she died, September 1, 1875, aged seventy-eight years. Having given brief biographies of this somewhat remarkable family, who may be justly termed

the founders of the Drama in Kentucky, I shall proceed with my narration.

Little occurred of note during the residue of my season in Louisville. It was a very miserable one, but I worried through it to about the 1st of April, 1830, when having arranged for the occupancy of the Columbia Street Theatre, Cincinnati, I returned with my company to that city, intending to make a short season there and then proceed to Pittsburg. Shortly after commencing the season, Mr. Henry J. Finn came along, I believe from New Orleans, on his way to New York. I engaged him for a few nights. Although one of the best actors of the day in his particular line of comedy, he did not draw enough to make the engagement remunerative to him or the management.

Harris G. Pearson was the next transient "meteor" to pass our theatrical horizon, but his attraction was even less than that of Mr. Finn. Then came "Herr Cline," as he was called in the play-bills of the day, who, instead of being a German, as the prefix "Herr" would imply, was an English Jew, whose name was John Cline, a somewhat celebrated rope-dancer of that day. He was engaged for a few nights, and seemed to suit the taste of the people of Cincinnati in his performances on the rope better than did the two previous gentlemen with the productions of some of the best dramatic authors. He drew very well, and filled the house for seven nights. Wishing to avail myself of his probable attraction at Pittsburg, I closed my season at Cincinnati briefly, and proceeded with him to the smoky city. We opened there in June, 1830, and played two nights, when Cline commenced and performed for two weeks to good business; but the old theatre would not hold many people, and after Cline's share there was not much left for the management. About this time Miss Dunham left the company and proceeded to New York. Her sister, Mrs. Jackson, and brother-in-law, A. W. Jackson, had left my company at Louisville to proceed eastward. My season at Pittsburg, take it all together, was not very successful. I closed about the 4th of July for a vacation, opened again about the middle of August, and worried along to fluctuating business until about the 1st of November. During the fall season James H. Caldwell came through Pittsburg, on his way South, and stopping a day or two in that city, we had some conversation together, that resulted in my agreeing to join his company at New Orleans some time in December following. The fact is, I found there was no hope of making a living by acting in the towns I had recently been working in; and to add to my

dilemma, the temporary theatre I had put up on St. Francis Street, Mobile, in the spring of 1829, had been during the past summer burned down, in consequence of some stables adjoining taking fire. Mr. Caldwell wished me to take the management of a branch company for him, to perform in Natchez, St. Louis, and Nashville; and although the offer that he made me was not very liberal, I thought it better for me to take a certainty, as I was then situated, than to continue in the doubtful way in which I had been laboring. So, notifying the company of my intentions, I advised them to be looking out for situations in other companies. Mr. Caldwell engaged, besides myself and wife, Mr. and Mrs. McClure, Miss Petrie, Mr. Still, Mr. and Mrs. Watson (the latter lately Miss Rowe), and Mr. McCafferty, and perhaps one or two others, for I do not recollect at this time the whole number, nor the persons.

I concluded my season at Pittsburg on the 1st of November. On the 5th of the same month my wife presented to me our sixth child, my dear William, that was suddenly taken from our embraces ten years after, by drowning. As soon as my wife could safely travel, we embarked on a steamer for Louisville. Those engaged at New Orleans took the same conveyance with us, and some remained at Pittsburg, while others proceeded at once to the Eastern States. On the way down the river we came near losing our child from a severe cold, taken, as we supposed, from too early a start on our journey, and the uncomfortable conditions of steamboat travel in those days on the Ohio River. I was awakened one morning about sunrise, and told that the child was dead. I immediately proceeded to the ladies' cabin, where my wife had a state-room, and took the child upon my lap, to all appearances a corpse. After gazing upon him for a few minutes, I had a feeling take possession of me that it was not death, and bending over him, my face close to his, I heard, or fancied that I did, a whisper, that seemed near his face, "He is not dead." I thought awhile, and then asked my wife if she had any hartshorn with her. She replied negatively, but soon recollected that she had a liniment containing hartshorn, which she handed to me. Dipping my finger in this, and putting it into his mouth, in a few minutes the death pallor left his face, and the flesh assumed its natural hue; then the lips their color; then an action of the throat like unto swallowing, and shortly gently breathing, and finally a slight opening of the eyes. I continued these efforts of mine until the breathing seemed natural and unobstructed. I then had mustard-plasters put on the breast and feet, and in a few hours life seemed reviving in him. The

boat landed at Marietta, a small town in Ohio, for me to get a physician to him. I was told of a Dr. M —, and I started to find him. I had not gone two hundred yards when I met a gentleman coming towards me; the same mysterious *something* told me, "This is the man you are in search of," and it was so. When the doctor saw the child, he told me I had done the best that could have been done in applying the mustard in the way I have described; he left some medicine and directions for taking it, and when we reached Louisville the physician that I called in then pronounced him out of all danger. In a day or two we were again embarked on another steamer, and on our way to New Orleans. We had a very pleasant trip, and on reaching our point of destination our boy was apparently as well as when we started from Pittsburg. I found Mr. Caldwell's season had commenced, and I entered upon my duties as an actor immediately. My wife did not commence until a week after.

During this season of 1830–31, Mr. Pelby appeared and played an engagement of six or eight nights; but being of rather a belligerent nature, he got into a quarrel with the manager, Mr. James H. Caldwell, in the progress of which Mr. Joe Cowell, then stage-manager for Mr. Caldwell, in order to show his *devotion* to the "manager," took up the quarrel for him. Words became high between them on one occasion, and Mr. Cowell thought he would give Pelby, "the Yankee," a specimen of English pluck and English pugilism; but he soon found that he had mistaken his man, for he came out of the affray with two blackened eyes. "Yankee" muscle was too much for John Bull's science. The matter was finally settled between the manager and the "star" through the courts of law.

Mr. Pelby performed in subsequent years at different periods in the Western theatres, but his efforts were confined principally to those of the East, particularly in Boston, where for years he was a favorite actor. Mr. William Pelby was born in New York, March 16, 1793. It has been said that while a boy he was put to learn the saddle-making trade, but his "vaulting ambition" was to be an actor, so he mounted his Pegasus and flew away to Helicon: then, when wishing to rise higher in the world, his *nag* played him a scurvy trick, and shook him off, leaving him, like another Bellerophon, to get along as well as he could by himself. His first attempt at acting was at Boston, in 1813; after that he played in New York City, at the Park Theatre, February 20, 1822, as *Macbeth*; and again at the same theatre April 24, 1832, in a new tragedy

written by Mrs. Caroline Lee Hentz, entitled "Werdenberg, or the Forest League." It was the last appearance of Mr. Pelby in New York. For many years he was manager of the National Theatre, Boston, where he died May 28, 1850, aged fifty-seven years, leaving a wife and two daughters, all actresses. The mother and eldest daughter are now both dead. Mr. Pelby, had he possessed the first great requisite for an actor,—voice,—might have left behind him a name that would have gone down to posterity among those of our great actors; for he had judgment, and a good personal appearance, but his voice was thick and husky.

Mr. Thomas A. Cooper, the tragedian, performed an engagement in New Orleans this season. Among the characters represented by him on this occasion was *Cardinal Wolsey*, in Shakespeare's "Henry VIII.," J. M. Scott performing the burly monarch, *Harry*. In the scene between *Wolsey* and *Cromwell*, at the close of the third act, Mr. Cooper was so affected by the words and the situation that tears flowed copiously from his eyes and coursed down his cheeks, so as to be visible to the performers at the side-scenes of the stage; and when he uttered these lines,—

"And when I am forgotten, as I shall be,
And sleep in dull, cold marble, where no mention
Of me more must be heard of,—say I taught thee.
Say Wolsey, that once trod the ways of glory,
And sounded all the depths and shoals of honor,
Found thee a way, out of his wreck, to rise in;
A sure and safe one — though thy master missed it,"—

I felt very sad, for my mind went back to the days when Thomas A. Cooper "trod the ways of glory;" but now his star had sunk to rise no more. He had just been in a manner crowded off the boards of the Park Theatre, New York, by younger and more popular actors,—Forrest, Booth, and Charles Kean,—and began to feel the full force of those lines of Doctor Samuel Johnson, "Superfluous lags the veteran on the stage." As my eyes gazed upon the old man, standing as he did before me, my memory travelled back to my boyhood, when Mr. Cooper was the god of my idolatry; when I used to look at him, as he passed my door, with feelings amounting almost to worship. On this occasion I could not restrain my tears of sympathy with the great actor that now stood before me in grandeur, like a magnificent old castle mouldering into ruins. During this engagement Mr. Cooper acted the character of *Falstaff*, in Shakespeare's "King Henry IV., Part First." He had performed it only three times before, and said he felt very uneasy in it; and I thought he must have felt

so, for it was far from being equal to his other representations,—certainly one he was quite unfit for,—and I believe he never attempted the character again, for I never heard of his playing it after that time. Mr. Sol. Smith says in his book, “Theatrical Management,” page 69: “Mr. Cooper appeared twice in *Jack Falstaff*, which character he personated, according to my poor judgment, better than any individual who had at that time undertaken it on the American stage since the days of Cooke, whose style he followed as nearly as he could.” Now, I saw Mr. Cooke perform the character of *Falstaff*, in the same play, during that gentleman’s first engagement in America, at the Park Theatre, New York, in November, 1810, and although I was then only fifteen years of age, I have ever retained a very fresh recollection of Mr. Cooke’s acting of that and other characters, and in my opinion there was not the least resemblance in the presentation of *Falstaff* by the two actors, and Mr. Cooper’s performance of it fell far short of that of Mr. Cooke. Mr. Smith says in his book (page 13), that in 1814 he removed to Albany, and “the *first theatre I ever entered* was situated in Green Street, Albany.” Now, Mr. Cooke died September 26, 1812, as stated by Mr. Ireland in his “History of the New York Stage;” and such is my recollection also. Taking these latter statements into view, I cannot see how Mr. Smith could see a resemblance in the acting of *Falstaff* by these great artists, when one of them died two years before Mr. S. ever entered a theatre. In fact, not to mince the matter, I have heard Mr. Smith say, more than once, that he never saw Mr. Cooke act. But “old Sol.” was never particular about what he said, when he wished to make a *point*.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Author goes to Natchez — Mr. and Mrs. Cramer Plumer — Author takes Position of Leader of the Orchestra — Clara Fisher — Biography — Charles Kean — Mr. and Mrs. Sol. Smith — Company go to Louisville — The Salt-house Theatre — Mr. John G. Gilbert — Mr. Sol. Smith and others leave the Company — Company start for Nashville.

ABOUT the middle of February, 1831, Mr. Caldwell desired me to start with the company he had arranged for me, and commence a season at Natchez, in a theatre that had been built by a Thespian Association, an incorporated company, in which Mr. C. had purchased a certain number of shares of stock, and made some improvements in the way of scenery, opening it for the first time in April, 1828. This theatre was built of brick, being about forty by a hundred feet in dimensions, and stood on a lot on the very verge of the city, fronting a street running at a right angle from the river, and located in close proximity to an abandoned grave-yard; that location being selected, I suppose, that the actors should have *memento mori* constantly in sight. The company that had been put in my charge by Mr. Caldwell was an incongruous and ill-assorted one, with many conflicting pretensions as to lines of business, and the consequence was that I had great difficulties to encounter in the management of them.

Our first week of performance was confined to the usual stock plays and farces. The first attraction we presented in the form of "stars" was that of Mr. and Mrs. Cramer Plumer, vocalists, both of English birth, and both making their first appearance in the United States at New York, in 1828. Mrs. Plumer, as Miss Cramer, first appeared at the Bowery Theatre, September 30, 1828, as *Giovanni*, in the musical burletta of "Don Giovanni in London," and with fair success. Mr. and Mrs. Plumer opened in Natchez in the operatic drama called the "Devil's Bridge," he as the *Count Belino*, and she as the *Countess Rosalvina*; they were well received. They were both good-looking, with pleasant voices, yet neither very great vocalists. I have no recollection of what they played afterwards. I believe they are both dead.

Among the annoyances of this season was the conduct of a German, the leader of the orchestra, of the name of Heidmann.

This fellow was guilty of a very mean and contemptible act. During the first week or two of the season, having tried comedy and musical pieces with very little effect, and having no stars that I knew of, in anticipation, I turned my attention to *spectacle*, in hopes that it would draw.

Mr. McCafferty being one of this company, I set him at once to work to get up "Cherry and Fair Star" in the best possible way for a short notice. A large portion of the vocal music was already known by those of the company who had been with me in Cincinnati and Louisville. Mrs. McClure was the *Cherry* of the piece, Miss Petrie the *Fair Star*, and Mrs. Sol. Smith the *Aryariana*; so that with rehearsing the choruses every day, I had got the piece in a tolerable condition to play in about two weeks. The night that it was presented for the first time the house was well filled, and the time arriving to begin, the prompter rang the bell for the musicians to enter the orchestra. Waiting, and finding that they did not appear, he rang again; waited, and then rang the third time. Finding that they did not regard the notice, he sent the "call-boy" to know the reason of delay. The boy soon returned, saying that they refused to go into the orchestra. This message was sent to me, and I immediately repaired to the music-room to inquire the cause of the difficulty, when I was informed by the leader that the orchestra would not play unless their salaries were raised to one-fourth more per week. I saw at once that here was an attempt to take a mean advantage of the management, and therefore without hesitation told the leader that he and those who were his partisans could take their instruments and leave the premises, and with the least possible delay. As he started to go, the others picked up their hats and followed him, — all but one, an old man of the name of Jones, who had been bred a *gentleman*, but had been forced to take the position of second violin under this contemptible leader. I said to him, "Mr. Jones, are not you going also?" "No, sir," said he; "not if I can be of any service to you on this occasion." I replied, "Mr. Jones, I thank you. Yes, you can assist me: we will enter the orchestra together, you with your violin and I with my flute. You, not being used to leading, nor acquainted with the business of the piece, cannot 'lead' it; but you can play, when I tell you, the first-violin part, where it cannot be well executed on the flute by an amateur like myself, and the second-violin part when I play the first." This he consented to do, and I went immediately before the audience, explained my situation, stated my intentions, and received a hearty round of approving applause and several "Bravos!"

As soon as I had obtained a flute from my house, Mr. Jones and myself entered the orchestra, and were greeted with a round of good-natured applause as we took our seats, when up went the curtain and the play began. The entire piece went through smoothly, with no more baulks than are usual on the first night of a scenic play; and when the two musicians rose to leave the orchestra they were saluted with another round of applause. This act of good nature and kind consideration added one more tie of affection to those I had for years pleasantly possessed in connection with the good people of Natchez. The next day after this performance I wrote to Mr. Caldwell, at New Orleans, stating the situation of affairs, and requesting him to send me a leader and some musicians. In the meantime I collected together three or four of such musicians as I could procure in Natchez, and went on with the performance of the play, leading the orchestra myself. I played the piece six nights, and then laid it by. As soon as those contemptible musical curs found I could or would do without them, the sneaking hounds begged to come back; but I would have nothing to do with them, and they shortly after left the city, and went I never knew where. In about ten days I had other musicians from New Orleans, and a letter from Mr. Caldwell commending in the strongest terms the course I had pursued.

About this time Mr. H. J. Finn arrived, having been engaged by Mr. Caldwell. This gentleman performed seven nights, to highly appreciating audiences and remunerative business. Then came the gem of the season, Miss Clara Fisher, at that time the finest comedy actress in the United States, and the most fascinating woman, on the stage or in private life, that I remember to have ever met in the profession.

She appeared the first night as *Letitia Hardy*, in the comedy of the "Belle's Stratagem," on which occasion I studied and played the part of *Doricourt*. She then performed *Albina Manderille*, in the comedy of the "Will, or School for Daughters," and the farce of "Perfection, or The Maid of Munster," in which she acted *Kate O'Brien*, and a most delicious piece of acting it was. I performed *Charles Paragon*, her lover, and I thought the man who could not love such a woman must be made of galvanized India-rubber. Clara Fisher, as a comedy actress, in such characters as she generally appeared in, — particularly those that were originally written for and played by the celebrated Mrs. Jordan, — has never been approached in excellence in this country by any one, excepting, perhaps, Mrs. Fanny Fitzwilliam, who came about

twelve years later to America ; but Miss Fisher had the advantage of more youth and beauty, and more refinement in her style of acting.

I cannot close this chapter better than by giving a brief account of Miss Clara Fisher's birth, parentage, and theatrical progress in the temple of fame. She was born in England, July 14, 1811. Her father, a gentleman of considerable literary taste, was at one time proprietor of an extensive library at Brighton, and at another time resided in London. Clara at a very early age displayed great natural dramatic genius, for when only six years of age, at an entertainment got up for children only, she enacted *Richard III.*, in the last act of that play, and astonished a large audience assembled on the occasion. A short time after, she was engaged at Covent Garden Theatre as a youthful dramatic wonder, and her success was so great that her acting was the absorbing talk of the theatrical world of Great Britain. On her arrival in America she had not reached her seventeenth year. Her first appearance in the United States was at the Park Theatre, New York, September 11, 1827, in the comedy of the "Will," where she played a highly successful engagement. In fact, as a comedy actress she has never been equalled in her peculiar lines by any one in this country. In December, 1834, she married Mr. James G. Maeder, a distinguished musician and vocal preceptor. For many years she was among the most successful "stars" in this country, by which she made a large sum of money, a great portion of which was afterwards lost by the failure of a bank. She afterwards was a favorite stock actress in many of the theatres of our country, and is yet living, a respected mother and grandmother, and highly esteemed by all who know her.

The next "star" that shone upon us was Mr. Charles Kean, who had just concluded an engagement at the Camp Street Theatre, New Orleans. This gentleman was then quite a young man, only twenty years of age, on his first professional tour through the United States. He commenced, I think, with *Hamlet*; then came *Sir Edward Mortimer*, in the "Iron Chest;" followed on succeeding nights with *Romeo*, then *Sir Giles Overreach*, in "New Way to Pay Old Debts;" then *Reuben Glenroy*, in the play of "Town and Country," and others. His *Hamlet* was a very sensible rendition of the character, and he looked it very well; in fact, it pleased me better than some of his later representations of the character. *Sir Edward* and *Sir Giles* did not, in my estimation, even approach in excellence that of the elder J. B. Booth. With

his *Reuben Glenroy* I was much pleased. I think he was the best I have ever seen. With the exception that he was under size for the "fine strapping fellow" that "*Cosey* speaks of, he looked and acted the character admirably. And his audience, doubtless thought as much, for I remember that, in addition to the general applause given to his performance of it, for one speech they bestowed upon him two distinct rounds of applause. It was delivered with great feeling and effect. This speech was the one that *Reuben* addresses to his brother's wife, the *Honorable Mrs. Glenroy*, a high-toned lady of fashion, one who has her infant cared for and nursed by a hired woman. The dialogue runs thus:—

Reuben (says)—"How does your sweet infant? Where is my little nephew?"

Mrs. Glenroy (replies)—"Quite well, and with his nurse."

Reuben—"Surely I am with his nurse?"

Mrs. Glenroy—Oh! no, sir; 'tis not the fashion for ladies—"

Reuben—"The fashion! Now, is it possible a woman should be so lost to her own felicity as to lavish on a hireling the cherub smile of instinctive gratitude which beams in the eye of infancy, while nestling on the bosom, at once the fountain of its life and pillow of its rest? Oh! my young matrons, in thus estranging your little offspring, you foresee not the perdition you cause, you know not the earthly paradise you abandon!"

Mrs. Glenroy (strangely affected)—"Sir, you are eloquent!"

And *I* thought so, and the audience thought so too, for they responded to the lady's last speech with most marked and hearty applause. Mr. Kean gained for himself great and merited credit for that night's performance: and when he left Natchez, his bearing had been of such a nature that he left upon the minds of a high-toned and educated class of people, such as then dwelt in and around Natchez, the impression of a gentleman and a scholar.

Mr. J. M. Scott, then a member of Mr. Caldwell's company at New Orleans, was sent up to me, at my request, to perform the character of *Long Tom Coffin*, in the nautical drama of "*Paul Jones, the Pilot of the German Ocean.*" This gentleman's reputation in that character had reached the South. I wished to produce this drama in Natchez, and I therefore transformed the galley used in "*Cherry and Fair Star*" into a ship for "*Paul Jones*," and brought it out in a very respectable style. I think I may venture to say that, as far as the *acting* went, it was as good as ever seen in the United States; gave very general satisfaction, and had a good run, considering the size of the city.

Among the members of the company placed under my direction during this season in Natchez were Mr. and Mrs. Solomon Smith. Mr. Smith was sent by manager Caldwell to

play low comedy and some old men, and Mrs. Smith for principal singing business, with characters of respectability in comedy and tragedy, such as were generally done by singing ladies in small companies. Mrs. Smith (I am now speaking of the *first* Mrs. Smith) had received a pretty good musical education, and was a singer of fair capacity, but of very limited capacity as an *actress*. Mr. Finn, during his engagement, wished to perform the character of *Fixture*, in the farce of "A Roland for an Oliver," and the piece was cast by me, as I deemed in the best manner, according to the efficiency of the company and in accordance with each person's engagement, as I had understood them from Mr. Caldwell. The character of *Maria Darlington*, in this farce, was given to Mrs. McClure, she being the leading lady at the time, and *Mrs. Selborne* to Mrs. Sol. Smith, the latter character being almost as good as the former one. But Mrs. Smith preferred *Miss Darlington*, and claimed it as a part that belonged to the *first singer*, advancing in support of her claim the fact that there were *two songs* attached to the part, as to be seen in the printed edition. In vain did I urge it was not considered a first singer's part, and that when the farce was originally produced, at Covent Garden, London, in 1819, the character of *Maria Darlington* was represented by Miss Foote, who never assumed to be a *singer*, and who, as I was credibly informed, did not sing either one of the two songs now printed in the published farce. The first one, where she is supposed to be insane, a simple ditty, and sung out of sight of the audience, was sung by another lady behind the scenes, and not by Miss Foote: and the second one was not sung at all, it having been introduced at a later date. And this course was pursued at Natchez. The *acting* of the part was of much more consequence than the *singing* in it, and Mrs. McClure was unquestionably the better actress of the two ladies. The result was that Mr. Smith withdrew his wife from the company, and I had to put another lady in for the character of *Mrs. Selborne*.

This was the first difficulty that I had with a man who was afterwards my partner in the management of Western and Southern theatres for eighteen years. I should not have referred to this little personal matter, had not Mr. Smith made what I consider an unjust remark in regard to me (although he does not mention my name) in his last book (page 69), and for the further reason that it has some bearing on incidents to be mentioned hereafter.

After a tolerably successful season in Natchez, of ten weeks,

I closed about the 1st of May, and proceeded with the company to St. Louis, where we performed in a building known then as the "old salt-house theatre." It got this name from the fact that the main part of it had been an old salt-house, that once belonged to Messrs. Scott & Rule, and used for the above purpose.

We opened in St. Louis about the middle of May, 1831, with a good comedy and farce, and for a few nights played to very fair business, considering that the city did not contain then above eight thousand inhabitants.

We had no "stars" here, and I was very soon forced to bring out spectacular pieces in order to draw the people to the theatre. "Paul Jones" and "Cherry and Fair Star" were here again produced, and both pieces proved attractive. If I remember aright, on this occasion the character of *Long Tom Coffin* was performed by Mr. John Gilbert, a recent acquisition to the company, who had been only about two or three years on the stage, but was afterwards a very distinguished actor, and for many years a member of Wallack's Theatre, New York. Our season here not proving profitable, we closed after performing six weeks. This had brought us into the hot portion of the year, and the house was without means of proper ventilation; there were but three small windows in the audience portion, and but two on the stage. In short, it was as miserable an apology for a theatre as any I had ever been in, and it did not at all surprise me that the people did not visit such a place during the hot weather we had in the June of that season. On the 29th of June I took my benefit, performing "Cherry and Fair Star" for the first piece, and winding up with the comic opera called "Of Age To-morrow," in which I personated five different characters. The house was well filled. Mrs. McClure's benefit followed on July 1st, when we performed "Joan of Arc," Mrs. McClure personating the heroine; the evening's entertainment concluding with "Catharine and Petruchio," from Shakespeare's comedy of "Taming a Shrew;" *Petruchio*, N. M. Ludlow; *Catharine*, Mrs. McClure. I celebrated our great national day of the 4th of July with the performance of a patriotic drama entitled "She Would be a Soldier, or The Plains of Chippewa," written by M. M. Noah, Esq., for many years a New York editor; the farce of the night being "Sprigs of Laurel," in which I acted the character of *Nipperkin*, a broad low comedy character, and quite different from those of my usual line of business; yet the public had often flattered me by their approval of my acting in it.

Mr. Smith says in his book (page 69), that he "withdrew

his wife from the theatre at Natchez, and that she did not appear again until his benefit night." Mr. S. here evidently means to convey the idea that in a burst of insulted dignity he withdrew his wife from the company (never to return), except to play for his "benefit" night. This statement is correct as far as it goes, but he solicited Mr. Caldwell, about the close of the Natchez season, to have her restored. This was granted, and Mrs. Smith was a member of the company during this St. Louis season. But at the conclusion of the season he left us, taking with him his wife, also his brother Lemuel, Mr. and Mrs. Carter, and Messrs. Palmer and T. Pearson. During the St. Louis season he arranged a small "gagging" company, and wended his way into Southern Tennessee, Mississippi, and Georgia.

I gave my last night's performance of this season on the 6th of July, and on the 9th we took our departure from St. Louis, *via* the Mississippi, Ohio, and Cumberland Rivers, for Nashville. This journey to Nashville was far from being a pleasant one. The water in the Ohio River was very low, and we had a tedious time in getting up the river from Cairo to the mouth of the Cumberland. The boat we were on was drawing too much water, and grounded several times; but the trip up the Cumberland River was still more vexatious. We were six days on board of a miserable apology for a steamboat, when we landed at Nashville.

The theatre that was occupied by us on this occasion stood on Summerville Street, and was the one erected by Mr. James H. Caldwell in 1826. It was a very sufficient one for the population at that day, but the arrangements inside were of the roughest and plainest kind. The walls of the lobbies were not plastered, very little convenience in the auditorium, and only a few scenes, of the plainest character, were painted for the stage. We began our season here on Saturday, July 23, 1831, with performance of the comedy of "A Cure for the Heart-ache," with the following cast: *Sir Hubert Stanley*, Mr. Duncan; *Vortex*, Mr. Gilbert; *Old Rapid*, Mr. Marks; *Young Rapid*, Mr. N. M. Ludlow; *Charles Stanley*, Mr. Connor; *Frank Oatland*, Mr. Watson; *Bronzly*, Mr. Schoolcraft; *Miss Vortex*, Mrs. McClure; *Ellen Vortex*, Mrs. Marks; *Jessie Oatland*, Mrs. Watson. The evening's performance concluded with the farce of the "Promissory Note:" *Mr. Markham*, Mr. McClure; *Scamper*, Mr. N. M. Ludlow; *Jemmy Nicks*, Mr. Farrell; *Bailiff's Follower*, Mr. Schoolcraft; *Mrs. Markham*, Mrs. McClure; *Caroline*, Mrs. Marks; *Cecily*, Mrs. Ludlow.

We had a good house for the opening, and the performers

were well received. My company at this time consisted of the following persons: N. M. Ludlow, manager and actor; John Gilbert, E. S. Connor, C. F. McClure, J. E. Watson, A. J. Marks, William McCafferty, Robert Farrell, Henry Schoolcraft, E. S. Duncan, T. Baldwin, George T. Rowe, Mrs. Ludlow, Mrs. McClure, Mrs. Watson, Mrs. Rowe, Mrs. Vos, Mrs. Marks, and Miss Vos.

During the first five weeks the houses were not very remunerative, but about the 1st of September, and from that time until the end of the season, they were good,—so good that I was enabled to send to Mr. Caldwell, for whom I was managing, several hundred dollars, which he was very glad to receive, to enable him to build a theatre at Cincinnati, which he had just then commenced. During the time I was managing for Mr. Caldwell in Nashville, he, with the main body of his company, were performing in the old “ Bath-House ” Theatre, on Sycamore Street, Cincinnati, that I had occupied the two previous summers. His success in it was not better than mine had been, and he desired me to send him all the money I could spare.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Season in Nashville closes — Manager goes to Gallatin — Jerry Dwyer — A Specimen of Irish Humor — An Irish Bassoon — The Season recommences at Nashville — Gen. J. H. Eaton — A Small Bit of National History — Gov. Branch of North Carolina — The State Legislature visit the Theatre — Company leave Nashville and return to Louisville.

AS I HAVE said in the preceeding chapter, our season in Nashville did not open very prosperously. The theatre had become neglected in the recent past years, and in a limited population, such as that of Nashville at this time, it required all classes to take an interest in any amusement that was to be made profitable.

During the space of three weeks succeeding the opening, I gave the public some of the best plays, and such as were popular at that day ; but to no avail. We had got into the middle of August, and the nights were intensely hot. Those who are acquainted with Nashville will, I believe, sustain me in my assertion that the nights there are hotter in midsummer than those of any other city of North America. It is built upon a bed of limestone rock, with very little or no covering of earth ; and after an exposure of eight or ten hours to a hot sun, the rocks become heated, and the dew falling on them causes a sweltering vapor to arise, that envelops the whole city. These causes combining induced me to close the theatre, to reopen about the 1st of September.

During the two weeks intervening I visited a small town called Gallatin, about twenty-five miles from Nashville. I had an acquaintance in that town, of the name of Jerry Dwyer, a jolly, good-natured Irishman, who kept a country store there ; and he had often importuned me to visit him, so I availed myself of this vacation to do so. Thinking I might give a night or two of public entertainment, as a matter of amusement to the people, in the way of songs, duets and recitations, I took with me three members of my company, — Messrs. Marks, Farrell, and Schoolcraft, — and together we got up two nights of tolerably good entertainments, which were well attended, and seemed to delight our rural audiences, who seldom had an opportunity to indulge in this kind of amusement. My friend Mr. Dwyer declared that they were delighted, and he

earnestly endeavored to make me promise to bring my entire company there; but I succeeded in convincing him it could not be made to pay,—the expenses would be too great.

We were about ten days in Gallatin, and passed our time pleasantly, our mornings in rambling about the adjacent country with our guns, our afternoons and evenings being passed with my friend Dwyer, who was a very amusing man, abounding with wit and fun. Added to these qualities he had the skill to play on the violin “to kill,” as they say in the West. His Irish jigs and Old Virginia reels would almost cause an orthodox Quaker to dance.

I will venture to relate here an occurrence that transpired one afternoon while myself and friends were in the back office of Mr. Dwyer, enjoying his rich humor, and indulging, with that gentleman, in a small taste of his “mountain dew.” Mr. D. was giving us one of his lively tunes on the violin, when there appeared at the door leading from the store into the little back room where we were, a tall, “six-foot” Tennessean, who, fixing his eyes on the violin on which my friend was playing, and at the same time chewing most vigorously a large quid of tobacco, that he rolled over occasionally from one cheek to the other, looked as though his whole soul was absorbed by the music. When Mr. Dwyer had ceased to play the tune, the tall fellow walked deliberately across the room, and, ejecting an immense quantity of tobacco-juice through the open window, turned around and delivered himself somewhat in the following words: “I say, ’squire,”—every man was a *squire* in those days who was supposed to be tolerably wealthy,—“I say, ’squire, you did that thing ‘to kill.’ I heard lawyer Quirk’s daughter try to play that t’other day on the pianner, but she can’t come within rifle-shot of you.” “Indeed,” said my friend. “Yaas. Why, you gin that old fiddle particlar fits! Why, I’d give my best shot-gun if I could play that toone as you did.” “Well,” said Dwyer, “why don’t you try?” “Why, ye see, I hain’t got no fiddle.” “Then buy one. I’ll sell you one.” “But, then, I hain’t got no money! I’ll trade with you for one. I’ll give you my very best shot-gun for one, if you’ll larn me to play that toone.” “Well,” said Dwyer (wishing to get rid of him), “come into the store and I’ll show you one of my fiddles;” and they both went into the front store. My friends and myself followed to witness the trade. Mr. Dwyer took from a drawer some cheap violins, such as he occasionally sold to country negroes, who often called for such instruments. The tall fellow, after examining, said: “Well, now, ’squire, how’ll

you trade?" "Oh," said Dwyer, "I can't trade in any other way than for *cash down*. You shall have that fiddle for twenty-five dollars." "Look here, 'squire; I hain't got so much in the world." "Well, then," said my friend, "we can't trade." So he turned from him and walked towards the back room again. Just then his eyes began to indicate that he had some fun in his mind; so giving me a significant wink, he took from a corner a large copper liquor-pump, such as he used for pumping whiskey from the barrels in which it was purchased, and turning to the countryman, said: "Now, here's an instrument, that, if you like it, I *will* trade with you for, and take your shot-gun in the trade." The man took the liquor-pump, and after examining it, said: "'Squire, what do ye call this thing?" "That, sir," said Dwyer, "is a *basoon*." "A what?" "An *Irish bassoon*, sir!" "'Squire, I'd like to see you play on it?" "Certainly," said Dwyer. So, placing the stem or tube through which the liquor found vent, between his lips, holding the pump in his left hand, with his right on the pump-handle, he commenced moving the piston-rod of the pump slowly, giving at the same time a sort of ventriloquial utterance of "God Save the King." It is only necessary to say that we, the spectators, could hardly refrain from spoiling the joke by our laughter. Suffice that they *traded*, and having brought his gun, the man took the pump home with him. But the joke did not end here. The next day, about the same hour, he returned to the store, bringing the pump with him, his eyes looking swollen and ready to pop out of his head, saying: "Look here, 'squire; I've bin workin, and blowin, this thing nearly all the night, and I can't git it to go." "Ah," said Dwyer, "I know the reason; its because I didn't give you the gamut." "The what?" "The gamut." "What's that?" "Stay, till I show you," said Dwyer. After hunting for a few minutes in a drawer, he took out an old *almanac*, with a wood-cut on the cover representing old father "Time" seated on a globe, floating in space, surrounded with the twelve signs of the zodiac. "Now," said Dwyer, "look here; there, do you see that?" pointing to one of the signs. "That's *a*;" then he sounded a note. "And now do you see that? that's *b*;" then sounding a note a little higher, and so continued on until he had gone through the alphabet to *l*. "There, sir; ye have the *twelve* musical notes; d'ye mind? Now, you've only to get them, and you're all right." The fellow seemed satisfied, and hurried off with the "Irish bassoon" and gamut. Now, I will simply add that Mr. Dwyer informed me that the fellow came

back the next morning by sunrise, and was waiting for him at his store, and as Mr. D. approached, said, in an excited manner: "Look here, 'squire; I've been blowing into this cussed thing till I've nearly blowed my brains out, and I'll be d—d if I can get a single squeak out of it!" Finally, Mr. Dwyer gave the man his gun back again, got his liquor-pump, and we all had a hearty laugh over the "Irish bassoon."

We recommenced our season in Nashville on Saturday, September 3d, with the comedy of the "Dramatist." The performance was very well received, to a tolerably well filled house. A considerable number of persons had returned to the city after their summer excursion, and seemed disposed to enjoy themselves in the way of theatricals. With our regular stock-pieces, including "Paul Jones" and "Cherry and Fair Star," we were getting through the month of September tolerably well, and with some money ahead in the treasury. My expenses were light, for the company was small and salaries moderate; then there was no actual outlay for the rent of the theatre, that being nominally the property of the man for whom I was managing. About the middle of September I received an intimation that a certain lady of the city, a leader of fashionable parties, would doubtless feel highly gratified by being called upon to *bespeak a play* for a certain evening, when it might be expected she would use her influence towards insuring a full house. Acting upon this hint, I had recourse to the old English custom, seldom or never followed in America, and waited on the lady, Mrs. George S——ll; was courteously received, and highly gratified with my visit, the lady receiving the proposal favorably, and promising to determine on the night and the piece to be played, if I would call on her the next day. As I had promised, I called on her the next day, and the night was fixed on a week from that day, and the play to be "The Way to get Married," and the farce of "'Twas I, or the Truth a Lie." The result of this night's efforts was a crowded house of the fashionables of the city, and a hearty reception of the performance of both pieces.

About this time a circumstance transpired that, indirectly, had connection with the national politics of the day, and this was a *bespeak*, or in other words a request, from a recent member of President Jackson's cabinet, the distinguished member being Gen. John H. Eaton, then late secretary of war. In order that the matter may be clearly understood, it will be necessary for me to recur to the condition of Gen. Jackson's cabinet about the middle of his first presidential term.

It will be remembered by a majority of the people living in the United States during 1831, that the principal power, or agent, that became a political bomb-shell, blowing up and scattering the Washington cabinet at that time, was a *woman*, and that woman the wife of Gen. John H. Eaton, then secretary of war. It transpired in this way: Certain scandalous stories had gained currency among the wives of a few of the members of the cabinet, having reference to her position while she was the widow of Purser Timberlake, formerly of the United States navy. The first act of hostility commenced with Mrs. Calhoun, wife of the vice-president, who carried with her Mrs. Branch, Mrs. Ingham, and Mrs. Berrien, wives of the secretary of the navy, secretary of the treasury, and the attorney-general. These ladies saw fit to give Mrs. Eaton the "cut direct," and refused to call on her, or in any manner to recognize her. This determination on the part of the wives of those eminent officials soon extended to themselves, and the result was an unpleasant coldness, and a lack of intercommunication in the transactions of the cabinet councils. The matter finally came to the knowledge of the president, who, after thoroughly investigating the causes, made an effort to reconcile the parties, but in vain, and he was driven to the necessity of dissolving his cabinet, that the interests of the country should not suffer by the private bickerings of its high functionaries. The first to send in his resignation to the president was the secretary of war, Gen. Eaton; the next was Mr. Van Buren, the secretary of state, only a few days later. Not long after, information having reached Mr. Ingham, secretary of the treasury, and Mr. Branch, secretary of the navy, that the president would be willing to receive their resignations, these gentlemen forthwith sent them in. Mr. Berrien, the attorney-general, being absent at the time of this occurrence, his resignation was not presented until about the middle of June. The whole country was struck with amazement, and no one could learn the cause of the rupture of the cabinet, until Mr. Berrien returned to Washington City; then the whole matter was published in a letter of his that appeared in print. There were rumors afloat of various causes for the divisions in the council-chamber, and some of them charging the president with partiality in reference to Gen. Eaton, who was from the same State with him.

Now for the connection of these matters with the theatricals of Nashville. One day during the last week of September I met Gen. Eaton in a street of Nashville, he being on a pleasure trip with his family. It was, I believe, the first visit of

Mrs. Eaton to that city, formerly the General's home. Our meeting was mutually pleasant. The reader will probably remember that the General and myself were fellow-managers of an amateur theatrical company in that city, as I have mentioned in a former chapter of this book. After making several friendly inquiries of my progress in life since our separation at Nashville twelve years prior to that time, and whether I was still pursuing my theatrical career, and upon my informing him that I was then performing in Nashville, he said he would like to visit the theatre some night before he left the city, and would take Mrs. Eaton, if I would perform for him the old comedy of the "*Honeymoon*." He said he remembered seeing me as the *Duke Aranza* in that play in 1817, and would be pleased to have an opportunity of seeing me act that character again, if I could conveniently produce the play. I told him that nothing could be easier, as the play was already studied, and had been recently performed in St. Louis. The time was fixed for the third evening from that day, and the comedy then performed; *Duke Aranza*, N. M. Ludlow. The farce of the "*Weathercock*" concluded the night's performance. The night was fine, and the house filled to its utmost capacity. The comedy proceeded, with the usual applause, until we reached act second, scene first, where the *Duke* takes *Juliana* to an humble cottage, which he welcomes her to as his home, and tells her shortly after that he is no duke, but a mere peasant, and a vassal of the duke! This enrages her, and she tells him that she will return to her father's house, when the following dialogue takes place between them: *Duke* — "Softly! You stir not hence, except to take the air, and then I'll breathe it with you." *Juliana* — "What! confine me?" *Duke* — "'Twould be unsafe to trust you yet abroad." *Juliana* — "Am I a truant school-boy?" *Duke* — "Nay, not so, but you must keep your bounds." *Juliana* — "And if I break them, perhaps you'll beat me?" *Duke* — "No, I'll talk to you. The man that lays his hand upon a woman, save in the way of kindness, is a wretch, whom it were gross flattery to call a *coward*!" When these words were uttered there was a universal burst of applause, such as I have never heard in any theatre since that time. For a few minutes I could not comprehend this extraordinary manifestation. Then it suddenly came to my mind that the words I had just uttered had been applied to the circumstances connected with the recent commotions that had taken place in the president's cabinet, in which Mrs. Eaton had been an unwilling actress. This I found afterwards was a fact, and was

meant as a rebuke of the conduct of those gentlemen who had raised their hands, through the instrumentality of their pens and voices, against this unfortunate lady. The applause was so great and general that even the chandeliers seemed to join in with it, for their glass drops rang out a joyous peal, in token of their pleasure.

This public demonstration of so large an audience led to a counter-action. It was not many days after when Mr. Branch, the late secretary of the navy, with his family, arrived in Nashville on a visit, I believe, to some connections of Mrs. Branch, when they doubtless were informed of this large expression of public sentiment; for I was again called upon by a gentleman, a resident of Nashville, who stated to me that there was a desire existing among many people in that city to show some particular attention to Gov. Branch and his family, and suggested that I would do well to invite him and his family to the theatre, and appropriate a box for them and their friends; the gentleman stating at the same time that he would see that the house should be well filled on the occasion. This gentleman I knew was a man of extensive connections and weighty influence, and I felt satisfied would fulfil all that his language had indicated to me; so we settled upon the play and the night, both of which he left to me to determine. It was appointed to take place three days after our interview, and the play to be the comedy of "A Cure for the Heartache," and the farce of "Turn Out, or the Enraged Politician." The comedy was cast the same as on the opening night of this season. "Turn Out:" *Restive* (the politician), N. M. Ludlow; *Marian Ramsey*, Mrs. McClure. Those pieces were selected by me, not because there was any point in either bearing on the great *affaire embrouillée* then agitating the fashionable society of Nashville, but simply because they were conveniently ready, and that I thought the titles of them, especially the farce, might be suited to the occasion. The night came, and the weather was fine, and although the house might be considered, in professional parlance, "a good one," yet it did not count up in dollars to equal that of the "Eaton night," as we used to speak of it. During the residue of the month of October, what with gala parties, theatre parties, and other amusements, the little city of Nashville was kept quite in a lively condition. Toward the middle of October the State Legislature had assembled in Nashville, and I thought that perhaps I might induce a portion of it to visit the theatre by an invitation on some particular night, and by making the matter somewhat especial and important, and by bills and ad-

vertisements, get a full house for one night at least. Fortunately I was acquainted with two members of the lower house and with one of the senators, and I prevailed on one gentleman in each of those departments to rise at a proper time and read letters of invitation from me to the members of each house, soliciting their presence at the theatre on such night as they might please to designate. This was done by my friends, was favorably received, and a night set apart for the performance. The pieces that were performed on the occasion were the comedy of "Speed the Plough" and the farce of "State Secrets." The comedy was cast as follows: *Sir Philip Blandford*, Mr. Gilbert; *Sir Abel Handy*, Marks; *Bob Handy*, N. M. Ludlow. For the farce I remember but one of the characters, — *Thimblewell*, Mr. Farrell. My stratagem succeeded very well. The house was filled, and the receipts good, notwithstanding the number of free admissions. The season, I saw, must necessarily come to a close here, and I therefore commenced the benefits of such members of the company as were, by their engagements, entitled to them. Some four or five of them were well attended, and gave a profit to the beneficiaries.

I had received instructions from Mr. Caldwell to be in Louisville with my company by the 1st of November, if I could do it consistently with regard to other business connected with the scheme, inasmuch as the rent of the theatre in that city would commence at that date. He had rented the theatre of Mr. Drake for three months from the period above mentioned, Mr. Drake going to Frankfort with his company, to give performances in that city during the session of the State Legislature.

Our benefits being over and the business of the season closed up, we started from Nashville for Louisville about the 27th of October; and for fear of impediments from low water in the Cumberland and Ohio Rivers, the journey was made by land, which occupied about four days.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Louisville Season, 1831 — “*Rip Van Winkle*” — Mr. Parsons the first *Rip* in the West — Jim Crow Rice — Origin of the Song, “Jump Jim Crow” — Season in Louisville closes — Cincinnati — Bath Theatre — Joseph Burke — Dr. Burke — George Holland — Season at Cincinnati closes — Biography of Mrs. McClure — Wm. C. Forbes — Author concludes to retire from Theatrical Life — Goes on a Pleasure Trip with Mr. Holland and Mr. Forbes — Harrodsburg Springs — Breakfast at a “House of Entertainment” — Holland says Grace — Quarrel between Holland and Ludlow — A Funny Scene.

WE commenced our Louisville season on Thursday, November 17, 1831 with the comedy of “Laugh when You Can,” which was followed by the farce of “’Twas I,” to rather a scanty audience for a first night; the second was still less. The first well-filled house that we had was on Monday, November 21st, when I gave to the Louisville public for the first time the drama of “*Rip Van Winkle*.” We had performed this drama about three years before in Cincinnati, and that was its *first* representation west of the Alleghany Mountains, and, I believe, the first time on any stage. Charles B. Parsons (afterwards the Rev. Parsons) was, I believe, the first stage representative of “*Rip Van Winkle*”; he certainly was the first west of the Alleghany Mountains. Mr. Hackett produced the same play at the Park Theatre, New York, on the 22d of April, 1830, but Mr. Parsons had acted the character at least six months before at Cincinnati. While on a visit to the city of New York, during the summer of 1828, I purchased a manuscript copy of the drama from an old stage friend of mine, upon his recommendation, and without reading it. Washington Irving’s creation of the character had obtained such favor and become so generally known that I was satisfied in my mind that even a tolerably well written play of that name, and containing that character, must certainly create an interest in the public mind. But in this I was mistaken, at least as far as Cincinnati was concerned, for it passed off there without appearing to create any interest more than a drama on any ordinary subject, with the exception of one speech, which was not the author’s, but introduced without my previous knowledge by one of the actors in the piece. This actor was a young gentleman of education, who was performing on

the stage under the name of Barry; but that was not his real name, and he was acting the part of *Nicholas Vedder* in this drama. In the scene where *Rip* returns to his native village after the twenty years of sleep that he had passed through, and finds the objects changed from what he remembered them,—among other things, the sign over the door of the tavern where he used to take his drinks,—he inquires of *Vedder*, whom he had recognized, and to whom he had made himself known, who that sign was intended to represent, saying at the same time that the head of King George III. used to hang there. In reply to him, instead of speaking the words of the author, Mr. Barry said: “Don’t you know who that is? That’s George Washington.” Then *Rip* said: “*Who is George Vashindown?*” To which Barry replied, using the language of Gen. Henry (see his “Eulogy on Washington,” December 26, 1799): “He was first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen!” This woke the Cincinnatians up. The utterance of these words, given with all the fire of a young American, drew down such a burst of applause as I had never heard before. It was prolonged and almost deafening; and this was repeated with equal effect at each subsequent representation of the drama. This would have been more gratifying had the jingle of dollars echoed the applause. Many years after the period I am speaking of, in a conversation with my young friend Jefferson, during an engagement he was fulfilling in New Orleans, and while he was acting the character of *Rip Van Winkle* to crowded houses, I asked him why he did not have the lines referred to above inserted in his own copy of the play? His reply was that, “in the first place, they were not the words of the drama; they would be out of place spoken there, and if uttered in that situation, would most assuredly injure the remainder of the scene, if not the whole play. The minds of the audience would fly off on a patriotic rampage, and I should not be able to get them back again to a consideration of the play.” On reflection, I thought my friend was decidedly right.

I do not remember that I ever heard who was the original dramatizer of this character; there was no name, claiming authorship, attached to the copy that I had. The writer of this play—the first to bring “*Rip Van Winkle*” on the stage—probably little dreamed of how often “old *Rip*” would be compelled to walk the “boards” for the amusement of the civilized world. On Mr. Hackett’s first visit to England professionally, he put this drama into the hands of Mr. Bernard, a play-writer of London, to be remoulded, which this gentleman did to a mod-

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erate extent. I saw Mr. Hackett perform the character of *Rip Van Winkle* after his return from London, and I could discover but very little alteration in either the language or the incidents of the play. After Mr. Hackett had established a reputation for his representation of the character of *Rip Van Winkle*, Mr. Charles Burke, a half-brother of Mr. Joseph Jefferson, essayed the character, and with much success; yet he gave quite a different view of it than that of Mr. Hackett's drawing. This gentleman's copy of the play was nearly, if not exactly, the same as the one that I had produced in Cincinnati in 1829. After the death of Mr. Charles Burke, Mr. Joseph Jefferson came out with his representation of "old *Rip*," and this was formed on a mould of his own, containing the best points of Mr. Hackett and Mr. Burke, — not so unsophisticated and good-humored as Hackett's, nor yet so low and sharp-witted as Burke's; in short, the character, in my mind, as presented by Mr. Jefferson, was just what Washington Irving intended it to be.

At the conclusion of this Louisville season Mr. Thomas D. Rice ("Jim Crow") joined our company again. He had been for a year or so previous in the theatrical company of Mr. Samuel Drake, Sr., during which time he had been, among other professional duties, singing the negro song of "Jump, Jim Crow," which he had picked up in the following manner: One spring season of the Louisville Theatre, on a clear, bright morning, during the rehearsal of some play in which Mr. Rice had but little to do, as he was standing on the stage, at a back door that looked out upon the rear of a stable-yard, where a very black, clumsy negro used to clean and rub down horses, he was attracted by the clearness and melody of this negro's voice, and he caught the words, the subject of his song; it was the negro version of "Jump, Jim Crow." He listened with delight to the negro's singing for several days, and finally went to him and paid him to sing the song over to him until he had learned it. About this time the manager, Mr. Drake, was bringing out a small local drama entitled the "Rifle," in which Mr. Rice had been cast for a *Kentucky corn-field negro*, and when the piece was produced he requested Mr. Drake's permission to introduce and sing his newly acquired negro song of "Jim Crow," which Mr. Drake reluctantly consented to. The result was that "Jim Crow" ran the piece to full houses for many nights, when without the song it is highly probable Mr. Drake's drama would have been a "dead duck."

Mr. Wemyss, in his "Twenty-six Years' of the Life of an

Actor and Manager," gives a version of this incident, different in some respects (see vol. 1, page 206), stating that it occurred in Pittsburg. But, as *Sir Benjamin Backbite* says of his uncle *Crabtree's* story, "My uncle's may be more circumstantial, but my story is the *true* one."

It is amazing how insignificant, often, appear the points from which men's fortunes have arisen, and the pivots from which they have been whirled into distinction, and even eminence. If Mr. Rice had not been standing at the back-door of the Louisville Theatre on a certain day, the probabilities are that he would never have gained the notoriety nor the wealth he afterwards acquired. It was at this time, and on such an occasion, that he laid hold of the clew that led him on to fame and fortune.

Mr. Rice remained with me until the end of the ensuing Cincinnati season. He then went East, and appeared at the Walnut Street, Philadelphia, in his negro song of "Jim Crow," which was highly successful. From thence he went to New York City, and appeared at the Bowery Theatre, November 12, 1832, in his song, which proved to be an immense success. Mr. Ireland, in his "Records of the New York Stage," says: "His popularity was unbounded, and he probably drew more money to the Bowery treasury than any other American performer in the same period of time."

Our Louisville season lasted about eleven weeks, during which we played only to tolerably well filled houses, and without any thing transpiring, that I recollect, worth recording here. We closed our season on Saturday, February 3, 1832, and opened in Cincinnati on Monday, the 12th of the same month, in the Columbia Street Theatre, with the comedy of the "Dramatist" and the farce of the "Lottery Ticket;" Mr. Rice enacting the character of *Wormwood*, in the latter, and singing "Jump, Jim Crow," which was called for by the people. We were compelled to have it sung, a very arbitrary and inconvenient custom existing at that period, in the Western theatres, of calling for favorite songs not in the bills of the day, yet known to have been sung by some favorite performer then in the company.

The first two week's performances of the Cincinnati season were but indifferently attended, and it was not until Master Joseph Burke, the young Irish Roscius, presented himself to the Cincinnatians, that the receipts of the theatre equalled the expenses. But Master Burke drew effectually; to use a common expression, he "drew like a fly-blister." He was the greatest dramatic and musical phenomenon that I ever beheld,

*Queller is quoted as saying - consumed by fire, and
burned in 1830. -*

said Dr. Burke, "I will convince these gentlemen of the orchestra that you are mistaken. You call the *violoncello* your best instrument, do you not?" "Yes, sir," said Mr. M. "Well, sir, I would like you to hear my son play on your instrument; will you oblige me so much?" "Yes, sir." The doctor, then addressing himself to the leader, "Will you, Mr. Jonas, have the goodness to select from among your orchestra music, none of which, probably, my son is familiar with, some piece wherein the *violoncello* is an important instrument, distribute the parts, and give the *violoncello* part to my son, and let this gentleman see whether Joseph can play the part correctly?" This was done, and when they were through he requested they would oblige him so much as to play it over again, as he wished Mr. M. to take his instrument and play the part, that Joseph might hear him play it, and if possible profit by it." This Mr. M. very sullenly consented to do. As soon as he took up the instrument to begin, Mr. Ambroise took a station behind him, but so he could look over the music-book. When about half through, Mr. Ambroise called out "Stop," and addressing Mr. M., said, "You played two bars there wrong;" and asked the leader to go back to a certain passage, and to play again from that point, with a request that he would pay particular attention to the playing of the *violoncello*. This was done, and when they had reached the bars where Ambroise had stopped them, the leader rapped, stopped the orchestra, and pointed out to Mr. M. the error he had committed. They then went on to the end. When they were through, Dr. Burke addressed the leader, and requested to know whether Master Burke had played the piece correctly, and receiving an affirmative answer, he then turned to Mr. M. and said, "You have asserted that Master Burke is no *musician*. Now, sir, we have proved that he is a better musician than you are; and if I ever hear of your repeating this insult, by Ja—s, I'll cut off both your ears."

Master Burke's engagement was a very successful one, and after two weeks' performance he left us, with the warmest esteem of all those who knew him, and the highest admiration of all who had witnessed his professional accomplishments.

The next "star" that beamed upon the Cincinnatians was a *dog-star*, my own dog Nero, who had established himself as a favorite in that city three years before. His appearance in *Carlo*, the "Dog of Montargis," drew a full house, notwithstanding the great draught that had been made upon the public purse by Master Burke. Although at this time Nero was quite ill of the disease that was slowly destroying his life,

yet his efforts were sufficient to draw three tolerably well filled houses. We then put the drama aside to make room for Mr. George Holland,—the ever-renowned George, the kind-hearted George, the well-remembered and deeply regretted George! Mr. Holland made his first appearance in *Jerry*, in a burletta entitled “A Day After the Fair,” in which he personated six different characters,—viz., *Jerry*, a smart servant, a drunken cobbler, an old ballad-singer, a drummer, a French songstress, and a madman,—in all of which he was inimitable. He afterwards played *Thomas*, in the farce of the “Secret,” in which he has never been equalled in the United States.

Mr. Holland’s engagement was limited to six nights, during which time the business of the theatre was remunerative. I shall have occasion to say more of this gentleman hereafter, for he was a man that occupied prominent positions at different times in the Western Drama.

As I have before stated, during the summer of 1831 Mr. James H. Caldwell commenced to build a theatre in Cincinnati. The building fronted on Third street, and stood on or near the corner of Broadway. He proceeded with it to about the first floor, and then stopped until the next spring, when he resumed the work, and finished it in time to open the house on the 4th of July, 1832, with the comedy of the “Soldier’s Daughter,” and the comic opera of “No Song, no Supper.” It was a very convenient and well-built theatre, of seventy feet front by one hundred and thirty-seven deep, a large pit and three tiers of boxes, seating about seven or eight hundred people. Near the 1st of April I received a letter from Mr. Caldwell, then about to end his New Orleans season, desiring me to close at Cincinnati and take the company to Louisville, there to occupy the building I had recently left, Mr. Drake’s theatre, as he wished to bring his New Orleans company to Cincinnati, that he might be there to superintend the finishing of his new theatre, which he hoped to open by the 1st of July. In accordance with this desire, I proceeded to give the company the benefits that their engagements called for, and I wound up the season about the last week in April, proceeding at once to Louisville. Mr. Caldwell arrived in Cincinnati before we left, and his company about two weeks after, when he immediately opened his season in the house we had vacated. At the close of this season of mine in Cincinnati, Mr. and Mrs. McClure and Mr. T. D. Rice left the company and proceeded to Philadelphia. The former, Mrs. McClure, performed in the Chestnut Street Theatre a few nights as a “star,” and afterwards was permanently engaged

in Philadelphia. Mr. Rice appeared in his song of "Jump, Jim Crow," at the Walnut Street Theatre.

As I shall not have occasion to speak of Mrs. McClure again in this narrative, and as she was prominent among the early pioneers of the Drama of the West, I will here insert a short sketch of her early career. Mrs. McClure, whose maiden name was Mary Ann Meek, was born in New York City, about the year 1808. She joined my company as a novice, in the summer of 1826, being, as I supposed, about eighteen years old at that time, and was sprightly and handsome, with brilliant dark eyes, of a very pleasing expression. Her first appearance on the stage was at Pittsburg, September, 1826. She made her first appearance in the city of New York, October 8, 1828, as *Lady Amaranth*, in the comedy of "Wild Oats," at the Chatham Theatre, then under the management of Thomas A. Cooper and N. M. Ludlow. She returned with me to Mobile, herself and husband remaining with me in the South and West until the spring of 1832. She was a great favorite with the theatre-going people of the Mississippi Valley, and we parted with her with great reluctance. After her appearance and sojourn in Philadelphia, in which city she became a great favorite, she went again to New York City, where she appeared at the Park Theatre, in March, 1833, as *Mathilde*, the "Bohemian Mother." In the following month, on the 13th of April, she appeared as *Elvira*, in "Pizarro," to the *Rolla* of Mr. Thomas Hamblin, at the Bowery Theatre, and afterwards was engaged in that theatre as a leading actress for several seasons. Her last appearance in the city of New York, that I am aware of, was at the National Theatre, in 1844. After the death of Mr. McClure she is said to have married a Mr. Noah, I believe a son of Major M. M. Noah, formerly a well-known editor and literary man of the city of New York.

We opened in Louisville, Monday, May 7, 1832, with the comedietta of "Paul Pry" and the farce of the "Liar," *Paul Pry* in the former and *Young Wilding* in the latter being personated by N. M. Ludlow. The second night's performance of the season (Wednesday, 9th of May) was the commencement of the engagement of Mr. George Holland, in his own piece of "A Day After the Fair," which was followed by a round of his peculiar pieces, his engagement extending to two weeks, during which he generally played to remunerative receipts, establishing himself at once as a favorite.

At the conclusion of his engagement Mr. Holland remained in Louisville, and he and his wife (his first wife) became

inmates of my house and family. This was the beginning of a friendship between us that lasted to the end of his life.

The next "star" with us was Mr. William C. Forbes, a gentleman who was endeavoring to establish himself as a leading tragedian. He was a smooth, clever actor, of some merit but little or no genius. He commenced his engagement with *Hamlet*, followed this with *William Tell*, then *Virginus*, *Richard III.*, *Damon*, *Antony* ("Julius Cæsar"), and *Rob Roy* and *Petruchio* ("Katharine and Petruchio") for his benefit. The business was not good.

Mr. Forbes was a young man about twenty-four years of age, of medium stature, with light hair and blue eyes, a pleasing expression of face, but not capable of great variety. His enunciation was smooth, but not forcible. He evidently had formed himself on the style of Mr. Thomas A. Cooper, then the greatest tragedian of America, but had not Mr. Cooper's genius, power, or dignity of manner.

The weather was now getting warm, and I had been instructed by Mr. Caldwell to close my season the 4th of July. I played one or two spectacular pieces, gave a few "benefits," and closed the theatre at the above date. On the same night, Mr. Caldwell opened his new theatre in Cincinnati.

During the spring just passed, I had been in communication, by letter, with a cousin of mine, who had for years been in business in the city of New Orleans on a large scale, on Canal Street. He proposed that I should take charge of a branch store of his business, the stock for which he would furnish, and would allow me one-half of the profits. This offer seemed to hold forth such pecuniary advantages that I was induced to accept his proposition, and it was settled that I was to commence early in the coming December. Above all other reasons, I was induced to embark in this course as it would gratify the wishes of my wife, who had become weary of a rambling life, and desired to become permanently resident in some city.

In consequence of this determination on my part, I immediately informed Mr. Caldwell of my intentions, and that he must not expect me to take charge of his branch company in the fall, if he proposed to continue to keep one in operation as in the past year. He said that he would like to have my services continued in that way, but thought that I acted very properly in studying the wishes of my wife and the comfort of my family.

After the winding up of my business with Mr. Caldwell, having some leisure, and Mr. Holland — who was living at my

house — having no engagement professionally until the fall, we concluded to make a pleasure trip to the Harrodsburg Springs, then a favorite place of resort for persons of leisure in Kentucky. Mr. Forbes, the young tragedian, happening to pass through Louisville about the time we were preparing to start for the Springs, expressed a desire to join us in our trip of pleasure, and he did so. We purchased a horse and wagon and started for the Springs, — no railroad conveniences in those days. Mr. Holland was the soul of our party, and I really believe I laughed more during the nine weeks we were on that expedition than ever I did before or since in nine months. When we had been at the Springs two days it became known who we were, and one gentleman that I had known in Louisville called on me, with two other gentlemen whom he introduced, and they desired to know if my companions and myself could not get up some kind of entertainment that would relieve the tedium that was hanging over them. I told them I would consult with my friends and ascertain what we could do, adding that our visit to the Springs was not intended to be a professional one, but if it were found, upon consultation, that we could get up an entertainment of any kind that would enliven the scene, we would willingly attempt it, and would give them an answer the next day. As soon as I mentioned the matter to Holland he was all agog for it, and immediately set to work to make out a programme for a night. He said to me, “Now, in the first place, what can you do towards it?” I replied, “But very little. I have not been in the habit of doing any thing of that kind; however, I’ll endeavor to do something; and Forbes said pretty much the same thing. So Holland, getting pen, ink, and paper, prepared to write out a bill of fare. “Now, then, first you, Mr. Ludlow, to begin the ball; what will you do first?” I told him, and he wrote: —

1. A Dissertation on Faults (M. P. Andrews) *By Mr. Ludlow*
(Kentucky's favorite Genteel Comedian).
2. "Alexander's Feast" (John Dryden) *By Mr. Forbes*
(The Young American Tragedian).
3. Song—"Hunters of Kentucky" (Samuel M. Woodward) . . *By Mr. Ludlow*
4. Recitation—"Alonzo and Imogene" (M. G. Lewis) . . . *By Mr. Forbes*
5. Ventriloquism (A dialogue between an old man and his servant)
By Mr. Holland
(The Celebrated English Eccentric Comedian).

“A splendid entertainment,” said Holland; “and I will write out three or four large ‘posters’ to be put up about the hotel. ‘Performance in the Ball-room of the Hotel — Admission one dollar for each person.’” Nothing less in price was

thought of in those days for any entertainment of the kind. I will only say that the ball-room was full, and the auditors delighted; the evening concluded with dancing, to which we were invited guests. But the people were not willing to let us off with that one night; we were prevailed upon to give another the following week, which was varied by Forbes and myself in our part, and the entertainment concluded with Holland's performance of some portions of "The Day After the Fair," which amused the people immensely. Our stay at the Springs was made very pleasant by the landlord and the ladies and gentlemen guests then present there.

After staying about a month at this pleasant watering-place, time began to pass heavily with us, and we concluded to make a trip to some of the neighboring towns. The first of them that we visited was Danville, and one or two afterwards, the names of which I do not now remember. I recollect we returned home through the town of Frankfort, and between that and Louisville stopped at the house of a lady whom I had, some fifteen years before, known in the former town, who was now married, and with her husband kept a house of entertainment on the main road. It was customary in those days for people of ample means and of good position to accommodate travellers with meals and lodging when called upon to do so, although they put out no sign or other indication of keeping a public-house. It was a great convenience at a time and in a country where hotels were few and far between, and travellers looked upon it as a kind of semi-hospitality, even though they paid a moderate price for their entertainment. Such was the position of this family, the head of which I had known as a member of the State Senate, many years before. We stopped with them through the night, and took breakfast with them the next morning. At the breakfast-table Mr. Holland was guilty of a great impropriety, that greatly annoyed me, occurring where and with whom it did, although I was sure he did not intend it as an offence to any one. Not understanding the customs of our country, especially those of the West,—to him a kind of semi-savage region,—he looked upon our entertainers as he had been used to view the keepers of small roadside inns of England. When all were seated at the breakfast-table, the landlord at the head and his lady at the foot of it, there was a silent pause for a few seconds, as is customary with us previous to saying "grace," which Mr. Forbes and myself understood; so, gently bowing our heads, as we saw the landlord preparing to begin his matutinal devotions, to my great astonishment I heard Holland, who

was next to me, muttering over to himself something intended to convey the idea that *he* was saying *grace*, not a word of which was intelligible except "Amen." This done, he straightened himself up, and put on such a serio-comic face that I had hard work to keep from laughing, although vexed enough to have knocked him off his seat. I dared not look at Forbes, lest we should both burst into a laugh, and make the case worse. The good landlord and landlady looked at each other amazed, appearing to be not able to determine what to make of it. I got up from the table as soon as possible, kept out of the way of the lady until the moment we were starting; then, lest she should question me, took a hurried leave of her and her husband and drove off. As soon as we got out of hearing, Forbes, who had been smothering a laugh, let himself out, and roared till the woods echoed, while I broke out with denunciations loud and bitter, and Holland sat with a pious look, like some persecuted saint, and uttered not a word. In fact, I was very angry with him, and made use of some plain language to him; and when he found I was serious, he appeared to get angry also; abused the country and every one in it, called the people "a d—d set of Yankee Puritans," and said he believed I was no better than the rest of them. Words got pretty high between us, and Forbes endeavored to quiet the troubled waters by pouring oil upon them, but with no success. Holland was so insulting that at last I said, "I can whip you or any Englishman that abuses my country." "Can you?" said he. "Jump out here and let me see you do it;" and he dropped the reins as if to follow me, but as soon as he saw me reach the ground, he caught up the reins, whipped up the horse, and went off upon a full gallop. The road had a sudden turn about two hundred yards ahead, and they were soon out of sight. In an angry mood I started forward, concluding in my own mind that Forbes would not allow me to be left thus in the woods on any account. In this I was right; I had not walked a half-mile when I saw the wagon standing at a well, and Holland watering the horse. When I came up with them they were both in the wagon,—Forbes laughing and holding his sides, Holland lying back on a seat, kicking up his heels and singing, "O, it's my delight, of a shining night, in the season of the year,"—lines of a comic song much in vogue at that day. By this time my wrath had subsided, and I thought it best not to renew the disagreeable subject. I began to think that the fault he had committed was nothing more than a

thoughtless spirit of fun which had actuated him, and I concluded it was better to let it pass without saying any thing more.

About sundown we reached home, found our wives well, and we had a pleasant supper, and a hearty laugh in recounting our adventures while we were gone.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Author and Wife go to New Orleans—Cholera and Yellow Fever of 1833—Mr. Caldwell takes leave of the Stage—Russell and Rowe—The Corner-stone of the first St. Charles Theatre laid—An Enumeration of Theatres in the South and West—Author Plays an Engagement in Pittsburg.

AFTER the return from my summer excursion, I had little or nothing to do, and remained in Louisville waiting an event that took place on the 6th of November, when my seventh child was born,—my dear little Mary,—who, eighteen months after, left us for a better and happier existence.

As soon as my wife's health would permit her to travel,—about the 1st of December,—we embarked on a steamer for New Orleans, to meet my engagement with my cousin, and to enter upon a new and a strange life to me. I found on my arrival there, that, to my astonishment, he had already taken a store and in part stocked it with goods; and, to my great horror, the store was on Levee Street, fronting on the river, and the goods such as my friends would not be likely to call for.

The winter of 1833 was a very tedious and unsatisfactory one to me. I have many doubts of my ever having possessed the qualities necessary to constitute a successful tradesman. I very soon arrived at this conclusion, and in consequence informed my cousin that I desired to end my experience in that line early in the coming June, and did so; winding up my affairs with him, and receiving for my labor only what money I had drawn for the daily necessary expenses of my family. What added greatly to the unpleasantness of my situation was the fact that the Asiatic cholera had reached New Orleans in the latter part of the spring, and was carrying off many of its inhabitants; and in consequence of this epidemic the theatrical company left the city the last of May for Cincinnati, and my wife being offered a situation in the company, left with them, which compelled me to remove to a private boarding-house. At the close of this New Orleans season, May 28, 1833, Mr. Caldwell took a formal leave of the stage, and made a speech, in which he declared his determination to abandon management and the cares of an actor forever. To that end

he leased his theatres to his late stage-manager, Richard Russell, and his late treasurer, James S. Rowe. How long Mr. Caldwell kept to this resolution will be seen in the sequel.

Notwithstanding Mr. Caldwell took a formal leave of the stage, both as an actor and a manager, we find him, according to his own statement (see "Dramatic Authors" of James Rees, page 56), laying the corner-stone of a large theatre on the 9th of May, 1835, which he opened on the 30th of November of the same year, — seven months, lacking nine days, from the laying down of the corner-stone. This great building was the "St. Charles Theatre," the *first* of that name, and the one destroyed by fire on March 13, 1842, of which more will be said hereafter.

I have always had doubts of the sincerity of Mr. Caldwell when he declared, as before stated, his determination of abandoning the profession of the stage forever. I considered it then, and do now, nothing more than a *ruse*, — a stroke of policy, with an eye to the future. Mr. Caldwell was ambitious to become president of the "Gas Bank" at New Orleans, of which he was already a member of the board of directors; an ambition not censurable, and a position which he well deserved, inasmuch as he had been one of the most active and efficient persons in establishing the gas-works of that city, and in obtaining a charter for that bank, the offspring of the gas company. It was not long ere this ambition was gratified. His situation as president of that bank gave him influence with the directors, sufficient to enable him to procure large loans from the bank; and to those loans he had recourse when his own treasury became exhausted. He mortgaged the ground and the improvements, as far as the latter had advanced, and by these means, in the short period of time as before stated, he erected in New Orleans the largest theatre in the United States at that time.

Notwithstanding that Mr. Caldwell sought every opportunity during a period of about twenty years to "crush me," as he said in 1824 he would, yet I have always been, and shall still be, ready to accord to him that meed of praise which his enterprise and exertions for the Drama most justly merit; but I am unwilling that certain false statements put forth by interested parties to glorify him at the expense of others shall remain on record, without at least a protest against them, and a statement of facts as they actually transpired, void of all false coloring.

Mr. James H. Caldwell has been put forward by Mr. Rees, in his pamphlet entitled "Dramatic Authors of America"

(1845), as *the* man, and the only one who had up to that time done any thing towards the founding or advancement of the Drama in the West and South-West. It was evidently an after-thought of Mr. Rees, and one entirely foreign to the character of his pamphlet. What his motive could have been for introducing a subject so entirely extraneous is best known to himself. Mr. Caldwell was no "dramatic author," or at least not known as such. He may have dramatized "Eugene Aram" from Bulwer's novel, as stated by Mr. Rees, but if it was ever acted, it could not have been more than once or twice; it certainly did not "please the million," or it is likely I should have heard of it. I was well aware of the theatrical management of Mr. Caldwell, and, in general, of any new play produced by him, during a period of forty years, yet never did I know of his having written and performed a play of his own. In speaking of Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Rees says: "As this gentleman's name is associated with the history of the theatres in the South, of nearly all of which he was the founder," etc. Now, these words are decidedly at variance with the facts of the case; there is no "history" yet published, I am confident, wherein Mr. Caldwell is noted as the *founder* of the Western and Southern theatres, unless Mr. Rees means his pamphlet as the "history." Neither was Mr Caldwell "the *founder* of nearly all the theatres of the South," taking the word *founder* as set down by Dr. Johnson, as used by Addison, viz.: "One from whom any thing has its origin or beginning." There is not a city or town south or west of the Alleghany Mountains, in which Mr. Caldwell performed, that was not visited and occupied by regular dramatic companies for years before Mr. Caldwell ever saw them. Mr. Caldwell and company performed for the first time in the South at New Orleans, on January 7, 1820, in the St. Philip Street Theatre,—the same building in which I first produced the English Drama, December 24, 1817.

The cities of Louisville, Frankfort, and Lexington, Kentucky, were occupied first with a regular company of comedians under Samuel Drake, Sr., in the fall of 1815; Cincinnati, by William Turner's company, in 1810 and by Collins & Jones and company, 1820; Nashville, by N. M. Ludlow and company, in summer of 1817; Natchez by the same, in the fall of 1817, and New Orleans by same, 1817; Huntsville, Alabama, by same, 1818; St. Louis, Missouri, by same, 1819; Mobile, by same, 1824; Montgomery, by same, 1827, and at other towns by the same at later dates,—all being a presentation of the Drama for the *first* time by regularly constituted companies of comedians.

A person reading Mr. Caldwell's statement, as set down by Mr. Rees in his pamphlet, would suppose that he had built nearly all the theatres of consequence in the West and South up to 1845. Let us see how this will agree with the facts in the case. We will begin in the South, where Mr. Caldwell commenced his operations. For the first three years that the gentleman performed in New Orleans, he occupied the theatres standing on St. Philip and on Orleans Streets. The former, the one occupied by myself and company two years prior to his arrival in the city; the latter was the French theatre, where he performed alternate nights with the French company. The third theatre occupied by him stood on Camp Street, and was built by Mr. Caldwell from his own means and by borrowing \$14,400 for a term of ten years, each subscriber of \$300 to have a ticket of free admission for that time, or until he returned the money. The fourth theatre occupied by him was the first "St. Charles," on St. Charles Street, near Poydras. This was erected by Mr. Caldwell from his own means and his own credit; with the former he bought the ground, on which, from the latter, he obtained a loan from the "Gas Bank" of New Orleans, sufficient to enable him to erect the building. I will here cheerfully say this was the largest and most magnificent theatre that has been built in the South or West even to the time of this present writing.

From this it will be seen that Mr. Caldwell has built *two*, and only two, theatres in New Orleans.

Now permit me to say something for myself. I also built *two* theatres in New Orleans, viz., the "American," on Poydras, corner of St. Francis Street, and the "St. Charles" (second), now occupying the site of the first St. Charles Theatre. The Poydras Street Theatre was erected by two citizens of New Orleans, for myself and partner, in 1840. The other, the present St. Charles, was erected by myself and partner, from our own means, — the firm of Ludlow & Smith, theatrical managers for *eighteen* years in the valley of the Mississippi. These were both large and fine theatres.

In Mobile, Mr. Caldwell caused to be built *one* theatre, afterwards destroyed by fire. In the same city, N. M. Ludlow, and Ludlow & Smith, through a course of twenty years, caused to be built *one* theatre entire, and to be built in part and finished interiorly *three more*, — in all, *four* theatres in that city, — all of them destroyed by fire, and two of them while unoccupied.

In St. Louis, Mr. Caldwell never erected a theatre. In 1827 he built an addition of about forty feet to an old warehouse, being the stage portion only. Into the old building he put

plain, rough benches of pine, one division of which was on an inclined platform, called the "pit;" over this was raised a narrow gallery, with seats of pine; this portion was dignified with the title of "dress-circle boxes," the whole being of the most primitive character and limited capacity.

Ludlow & Smith caused to be erected, in 1837, a theatre of extensive dimensions, — eighty by one hundred and fifty-six feet, — most conveniently arranged and pleasantly situated, standing on the ground now occupied by the post-office and custom-house, corner of Olive and Third Streets. It was built of stone and brick, and was a substantial and well-constructed theatre. It was used by Ludlow & Smith as a summer theatre, their winter season being New Orleans and Mobile, both open at the same time. In April or beginning of May they concentrated the best of both companies, and continued the St. Louis season until about the first of November, with the exception of a summer vacation of the month of August.

The *exterior* of the front of this building was never finished according to the plan, which embraced a portico of sixty feet on Third Street, supported by four large columns of the Corinthian order. But the building had cost so much when opened, that it was thought advisable by the stockholders — of which body Ludlow & Smith held the largest number of shares held by any one party — to defer the finishing of the front to a more favorable time; and thus it remained until it was sold to the government of the United States, on the site of which was erected the present custom-house, post-office, and other offices of the government. This theatre, the first large one in its capacity, was second only to the first St. Charles Theatre of New Orleans, in all the cities of the West and South.

In Nashville, in the year 1819, a brick theatre was built on Cherry Street by a Frenchman, a citizen of that place, which was commenced at my suggestion and in accordance with directions given by me, on which, it was understood, I was to have a lease at a fair rent; yet, when finished, it was rented to Collins & Jones, who bid higher for a lease of it than I had done. They performed only one season in it, — that of 1820, — lost money, and threw up their lease.

Mr. Caldwell, in 1826, built a theatre in Nashville, as he says, by borrowing a portion of the money required from the citizens, in \$100 shares. He never made a paying season there after the first one, except the season of 1831, when I managed it for him, the profits of which helped to erect the only theatre that Mr. Caldwell built in Cincinnati.

In Huntsville, Alabama, in 1825, a theatre was built by certain citizens, with the understanding that it was to be leased to me. Through the machinations and trickery of Alexander M. Wilson, I was cheated out of it, and the building was by him transferred to James H. Caldwell, as I have previously stated in this book.

According to Mr. Rees, and using Mr. Caldwell's language, the latter says that in Natchez, "in 1828, I finished the building commenced by the Thespian Association. I found four walls, and made a pretty theatre out of it, and furnished it with scenery," etc. This statement may be considered correct, I believe, except the "pretty,"—I never could discover *that*.

Now, these being the *facts* in regards to theatres in the South and West, I think it will be seen that James H. Caldwell was by no means the *founder* of the Drama in the South and West; nor did he build many more theatres than others, nor in any one instance was he the first to introduce the Drama into the principal cities of the South and West. Having set this matter in its just light, I now proceed with the consecutive incidents of my narrative.

About the latter part of June, 1833, the cholera still proving fatal to many persons, and business having almost ceased in the city, I closed my store, returned the unsold stock to my cousin, and started for Cincinnati to join my family. The mortality by cholera on the boat, during the trip to Cincinnati, was frightful. On my arrival there I found my family well, and my wife still performing in the new theatre, then under the management of Messrs. Russell & Rowe. I did not apply for a situation in the theatre directly, yet it was well understood that I would have been pleased to join the company; consequently, for a few months I was compelled to lead an idle life, a situation to me always irksome. I resolved that as soon as the theatrical season then progressing should be terminated, I would withdraw my wife from the profession and become a resident of Louisville, in accordance with her wishes and the advice of friends in that city.

During this summer, spent in Cincinnati, we were deprived of the services of our colored woman, a slave belonging to my wife, who had nursed our children, and whom we deemed so much attached to them and my family that she could not be induced to leave us; but she did leave us. She went out early one morning to get the marketing for the day, and did not return. I made what search I could, but without gaining any information in regard to her. I learned afterwards that some of her own color, free negroes, had told her that by the laws of Ohio she was a free woman, and by holding out to her

false lights of imaginary happiness in freedom, and with promises of what they would do for her, but never fulfilled, had induced her to leave me and elude my search.

When the theatrical troupe had departed for the South, I went with my family to Louisville and rented a house, with the intention of remaining there until something favorable, in the way of my profession, presented himself.

During the month of February, 1834, I received a letter from Mr. F. C. Wemyss, then manager of the new theatre at Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, saying that the play-going people of that city wished him to engage me for a time; that they desired to see me perform again; adding that if I could visit them, he wished me to come at once. After an exchange of letters, to adjust the terms, I went, and opened to a good house; the second night was not as good, and so on dwindling down to very little over the charges, which were first to be deducted before I could share any portion of the receipts. The engagement was a great disappointment to me, and quite inexplicable until thirty years after, when, conversing with a gentleman who had been a resident of Pittsburg at the time I performed this engagement with Mr. Wemyss, in 1834, by him I was told that on that occasion I had been the victim of personal jealousy and individual malice; he assuring me that he knew certainly that was the state of the case, and he related to me the following: "You know," he said, "that Mr. Wemyss called himself a 'genteel comedian,' or 'light comedian,' as it sometimes is called. When he first opened the new theatre, the fall previous to your visit, he performed a round of what he considered his best pieces, such as *Marplot*, in the comedy of the 'Busybody,' *Vapid*, in the 'Dramatist;' *Frederick*, in 'Of Age To-morrow,' with many other characters of similar kind, in all of which the people of Pittsburg had seen you often, and it was remarked by those people 'that the new Philadelphia actor was not equal to their Western actor.' This soon got to the ears of Mr. Wemyss, and of course he did not relish it much." "In short," said he, "some of the leading men there told Mr. Cooke, the owner of the theatre, that Mr. Wemyss would do well to engage Mr. Ludlow, if he could get him. After several unpleasant hints of the kind, it was concerted between Mr. Cooke and Mr. Wemyss that the latter was to write to Mr. Ludlow, to invite him to come to Pittsburg, and perform for eight or ten nights, to share after a certain given sum, called the expenses, with a benefit, on somewhat better terms, making the whole engagement a pretty safe one for Mr.

Wemyss, on the supposition that Mr. Ludlow's attraction would most likely secure the expenses of his theatre for the term of the engagement. Then the plan was arranged between Mr. Cooke and Mr. Wemyss that after the first night of Mr. Ludlow, Mr. Cooke, who was a *bon-vivant*, and a (supposed) wealthy banker in that city, and a particular friend of Mr. Wemyss, should commence a series of card-parties and late suppers, such as that gentleman knew well how to give, and invite all of his extensive acquaintances, — men who usually attended the theatre with their families, when any attractive feature was presented." The jolly fellows of the smoky city, as a general matter, were fond of good feasting, and they knew that Mr. Cooke was noted for his liberality in this particular. In this way Mr. Wemyss was willing to soothe his professional jealousy at a sacrifice of a supposed addition to his purse.

In a limited population, such as Pittsburg contained in 1834, a large portion of which were church-people, opposed to theatres, the absence of twenty or thirty well-known and influential supporters of the Drama, their families and friends, made a very important deficit in the receipts of the theatre.

CHAPTER XL.

Mr. and Mrs. Hilson — Death of Mr. Hilson — Biography of Mr. and Mrs. Hilson — Pathetic Instance of a Mother's Love — Mr. and Mrs. Simpson — Mr. J. G. Gilbert — Biographical Sketch — Jim Crow Rice — J. B. Booth — Mad Adventures of J. B. Booth — A Coffin — Funeral Services — George Lovell — Booth Arrested and put in Jail — George Lovell's Head delivered to Booth — Author engages the St. Louis Theatre — Proposes for a Theatre in Mobile — Takes a Company to St. Louis.

ABOUT the first week in June, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Hilson arrived in Louisville, on their way East, having been performing in the Southern States during a portion of the winter and spring. They commenced an engagement with Mr. Drake at his theatre, Louisville, shortly after arriving; and had performed but a few nights when Mr. Hilson was taken ill, and on June 23 he died very unexpectedly, of apoplexy, in the fiftieth year of his age. He was most affectionately attended by his loving wife, whose very soul seemed wrapt up in his existence. Mrs. Ludlow and myself gave such assistance and comfort to the dear lady as was in our power to do.

As this will be the last opportunity I shall have of speaking of these two admirable artists, I trust that a few brief remarks in regard to their professional career may not be considered out of place.

Mr. Thomas Hilson was born in England, about 1784, — his real name said to be Hill, — the addition to the name having been made when he embraced the histrionic profession. I have heard that his parents were persons of title, and that his father was so displeased at his joining the stage that he requested him to change his name. Be this as it may, he certainly had been used to good society, and was a *gentleman* at all times.

His first appearance, professionally, on the stage was at the Park Theatre, New York, April 8, 1811, in the character of *Walter*, in the little drama called "The Children in the Woods;" and this was a success.

It was said that he had appeared several times in amateur performance in England prior to his arrival in America, and thus had acquired an ease and self-possession not often found in novices. He soon became a great favorite in New York, and re-

mained so until the day of his death. My first meeting with Mr. Hilson was on the stage at New Orleans, in the early part of 1822.

In 1825 Mr. Hilson married Miss Ellen A. Johnson, whose parents were favorite performers in New York about the beginning of the present century.

Mr. Hilson possessed extraordinary versatility of talent, and was decidedly a man of genius. His style of acting was unlike that of any other person I ever saw, and without doubt entirely original. Then, again, it was so varied that in the different characters assumed by him, in different lines of business, you could scarcely recognize the same man. Few could discover in *Bob Tyke* the *Paul Pry* he had seen the night before, or in *Rolamo* ("Clari") the *Touchstone* of some other night. I never saw him appear in what might be called high tragedy; but Mr. Thomas A. Cooper, the tragedian, used to say that Mr. Hilson's *Iago* (in "Othello") was the best he ever met with in England or America. I remember also of hearing Mr. James H. Hackett say that Mr. Hilson's performance of *Shylock* was admirable. In addition to his histrionic powers, he was an artist of no mean pretensions as a landscape painter. I have seen some of the productions of his pencil that, I think, would have stood an honorable test of judicious criticism. Added to all these, he was a well-educated man, a high-toned, honorable man, and a courteous gentleman.

Mrs. Hilson was born in America, of English parents, as stated above. As Miss E. Johnson she made her first appearance at the Park Theatre, New York, on the 15th of January, 1817, being then in her seventeenth year, in the character of *Amanthis*, in the "Child of Nature," a play popular in those days.

I cannot better describe this fair creature, as she then appeared, than to use the language of Mr. Ireland, who speaks of her thus in his book called the "New York Stage:"—

"To a finely proportioned figure, of full medium height, she joined a graceful carriage, and an artless manner that at once won every heart. Her voice was musical, and in her clear, ringing laugh she eclipsed every actress that ever trod the New York stage. Under the judicious supervision of her parents, she acquired a theatrical education; was mistress of several modern languages, and possessed ornamental accomplishments suited to her sex."

Miss Johnson sang well, was a good musician, and played upon the piano and harp in a style considered to be of first order. She married Mr. Hilson in 1825, as before stated, and

as Mr. Ireland has said, it was “a match of purest affection, and we believe of unalloyed happiness,” to which I will add that it lasted until the day of their deaths. Mrs. Hilson’s devotion to her husband was so great that she appeared to think he had no fault in his nature. It was carried to such an excess as to become a fault, an instance of which I will relate, that other wives may be warned from pursuing such blind devotion. Mr. Hilson under all circumstances was a gentleman; it was not possible for him to be otherwise, for it was innate. Yet he was a free liver towards the close of his life, and at times “bided too long o’er the wine-cup.” This his wife could not understand, or affected not to know.

Shortly after the death of Mr. Hilson, I had occasion to call in a physician to prescribe for a member of my family; it was the same gentleman who had attended Mr. Hilson in his last illness. In the course of conversation, the death of Mr. Hilson was alluded to, and this physician said to my wife: “I believe I was the innocent cause of hastening that gentleman’s death. It was no fault of mine. Had his wife not misled me as regarded his habits, I believe I could have saved him from the immediate effects of the attack of apoplexy that carried him off. She replied to my question in regard to his habits in the most explicit terms, giving me to understand that he was a man not given to stimulating liquors; but I have learned since that he was. Being thus misled, I gave him medicines very different from what I should have done had I known his real habits.” I would not have mentioned this fact were the dear lady still living, but I wish to warn other devoted wives, and all persons, not to withhold the *truth*, no matter how mortifying it may be to one’s pride. Before closing my remarks in regard to Mrs. Hilson, I will relate a circumstance attending her own death, which, though partaking somewhat of a romantic character, indicates a deep flood of feeling, an absorbing love with which her soul was imbued, that cast aside all considerations but those pertaining to the object of her affections. The following information came to me from a lady professing to be acquainted with the facts: —

A short time prior to Mrs. Hilson’s decease, a daughter, an only child, then scarcely more than an infant, had a very severe attack of scarlet fever. One night, when the disease had reached that stage when all hopes of recovery had departed from the mother’s mind, and she had been led to believe that the next day would find her childless, in the agony of her grief she laid herself beside the dear one and sought *death* by inhaling the fevered breath of that child, which was all this

world contained that she deemed worth living for. The child recovered; the mother died on the morning of April 2, 1837. This child was cared for by her mother's dearest friends, Mr. and Mrs. Edmund Simpson, of New York, who reared and educated her as their own; and when she grew up to womanhood she married a highly respectable gentleman of fortune, and probably is still living. Mr. Simpson was an actor, and for many years a manager of the Park Theatre, New York, — a gentleman of integrity and benevolence. He died in New York, July, 1848, highly respected by all who knew him.

While writing the foregoing biographical sketches, I am reminded of a gentleman who may be properly ranked among the pioneers of the Drama in the West and South, who was under my management for three years, and who left the West this year (1834) to return East, to his native city, Boston. The person I refer to is Mr. John G. Gilbert, a gentleman who now stands at the head of his profession in his special line of business. — I mean that of old men, such as *Sir Peter Teazle*, *Lord Ogleby* ("Clandestine Marriage"), *Sir Anthony Absolute* ("Rivals"), *Old Hardcastle* ("She Stoops to Conquer"), and like characters. Mr. Gilbert is now and has been for many years stage-manager and leading member in his line of business in Wallack's Theatre, in the city of New York. This gentleman was born in Boston, February 27, 1810. At fifteen years of age he was placed by his widowed mother in a dry-goods store for three years. An inherent taste for dramatic literature led him, in early youth, to visit the theatre, where this natural passion was fed with seeing some of the best performers of the day and becoming acquainted with certain members of an amateur club of theatrical aspirants, he joined their association, in which he soon became a prominent member. From this platform it was but one step higher to reach the public stage; this step he took, and in his eighteenth year appeared at the Tremont Theatre, Boston, on the 28th of November, 1828, as *Jaffier*, in Otway's tragedy of "Venice Preserved." He was supported on this occasion, in the character of *Belvidera*, by Mrs. John Duff, then at the very acme of her immense popularity, — by far the best representative of that character that I have ever seen. The Boston *Evening Gazette*, in speaking of the event, said: "A young gentleman, whose name we learn is Gilbert, made his first appearance before any public on Friday evening as *Jaffier*, in 'Venice Preserved,' and the critics seem to be unanimously of opinion that a more successful *début* was never made in any place.

Mr. Gilbert continued to perform for a few nights, playing,

among other characters, *Sir Edward Mortimer* ("Iron Chest"), which was repeated on his benefit night. The following season he visited New Orleans, and was engaged at the Camp Street Theatre, then under the management of James H. Caldwell, remaining in that company until the spring of 1831, when he was under the management of N. M. Ludlow at Natchez, St. Louis, Nashville, Louisville, and Cincinnati, continuing with him until 1834, when he returned to his native city. During the time that Mr. Gilbert was with N. M. Ludlow he improved rapidly, developing extraordinary histrionic ability, of an unbounded range, and becoming a favorite off as well as on the stage.

On Mr. Gilbert's return to Boston he was engaged at the Tremont Theatre, then under the management of Mr. Thomas Barry, where he appeared as *Old Dornston*, in the comedy of the "Road to Ruin." Here he remained about five years. On the occasion of one of his benefits he was presented with a splendid copy of Shakespeare, with fine illustrations by Boydell, — a very valuable edition.

After playing for a few years in New York and Boston, he was in the latter city at the final closing of the Tremont Theatre; and being called for, he addressed the audience, and his was the last voice heard from the stage of that building to advocate the claims of Melpomene and Thalia; after that it became the "Temple" of fanaticism, and subsequently the abode of "money-changers."

Having a desire to see Europe and the condition of theatricals in Great Britain, in April, 1847, accompanied by his wife, he crossed the Atlantic; and on reaching London was offered an engagement at the Princess Theatre, which he accepted, and made his first appearance there in *Sir Robert Bramble*, in the comedy of "The Poor Gentleman," and was favorably received by a London audience. He also visited Paris and its theatres, and saw some of the best French comedians; returning to New York and appearing at the Park Theatre in the fall of 1848, as *Sir Anthony Absolute*. During the season he performed for the first time the character of *Sir John Falstaff*, and it being a success, the play was acted for two weeks.

In 1862, Mr. Gilbert became a member of Wallack's Theatre, New York, then under the management of the elder James W. Wallack; in this theatre he has remained ever since. On his birthday, 1879, he was presented by Mr. Lester Wallack, the present manager, with a beautiful silver tankard and two cups, bearing complimentary inscriptions.

Mr. Gilbert has been married twice. In 1836 he married Mrs. Maria Campbell, who died in 1866; his second and present wife was Miss Sarah H. Gavett, of Boston, whom he married in 1868.

Mr. Gilbert, in worldly matters, is comfortably situated, and follows his profession now more as a matter of taste than one of necessity. He is in good health, and in the enjoyment of all his faculties; is surrounded by troops of friends, and can look forward to the approaching frosts of age without apprehensions.

About the middle of June of this year, Mr. Thomas D. Rice came to Louisville, and for a few nights performed his Ethiopian pieces and sang his Jim Crow song with great success. Following him came Mr. Junius B. Booth, Sr., who commenced an engagement; but after the first night, was seized with one of his semi-lunatic attacks, and enacted some of the most extraordinary freaks that ever entered the mind of man, supposed to be sane. Passing the theatre door on a Saturday afternoon, about five o'clock, I found Mr. Booth on the sidewalk, with a board upon two empty barrels, on which were lying a number of rats that had been eviscerated; and as the people passed by with their baskets to the neighboring market, he would stop them and endeavor to persuade them that those rats were infinitely better eating than any kind of animal food that they could purchase at the market; that they were much more tender than squirrels, and cleaner than hogs. However, I believe he obtained no converts to his system of dietetics. On the night of this same day Mr. Booth performed the character of *Shylock* in his usual excellent manner.

Mr. Rice remained in Louisville after finishing his engagement, and was there during the time Mr. Booth was performing; and from him, an eye-witness, I learned the following particulars of one of Mr. Booth's most extraordinary and fantastic adventures: Mr. Rice was sitting with Mr. Booth one afternoon, in social converse, in a room at the hotel where Mr. Booth was stopping, when a clergyman, the Rev. Mr. —, was announced as calling by request of Mr. Booth. He was desired to walk up to the room, and on entering inquired for Mr. Booth, who stepped forward and was thus addressed by the reverend gentleman: "Mr. Booth, I have come to perform the last rites of our church over the deceased, as you desired I would." Mr. Booth bowed, thanked him, and desired he would step with him into the adjoining room. As they did so, Mr. Rice, not a little amazed, followed them; and arriving at the back of the room, Mr. Booth, lifting a black cloak, pointed

to a small coffin on a table, and removed the lid of it. The clergyman, in a very solemn manner, advanced to it, and bending his head over the coffin, gazed at the object within, and stepped back quickly with a look of astonishment and horror. Suddenly turning his eyes on Mr. Booth, he said, "Pray, sir, what is the meaning of this?" "Of what, sir?" said Mr. B. "Of this;" pointing to the coffin. "You requested me to come here and perform the funeral rites of the dead, and you present to my astonished senses a poor *pigeon*." "Well, sir," said Booth, "is it not dead?" "Yes, but this is an animal." "Well, sir, is not a man an animal?" "Truly said; but it is not a human,—it has no soul." "How do you know, sir, that it has no soul?" By this time the reverend gentleman had gradually backed out into the other room, and getting near the door, with a frightened look, said to Mr. Booth, "I will not suppose, sir, that you brought me here to insult me, and I hope your friend will find a strait waistcoat for you as soon as possible." Saying this he bolted out of the room and hastened away.

I have good reasons for believing this to be exactly true, for some ten years ago I read in a Western newspaper an account of this incident, said by the writer to have been given to him by the clergyman before referred to.

There used to be a story told, and not many years ago I read it in print, that among Mr. Booth's eccentricities was that he carried with him on his professional journeys the skull of a friend of his, which he used for *Yorick's* skull in "Hamlet" whenever he enacted the Danish Prince. I will not undertake to say how much truth there may be in this story, but I will state a circumstance that, in connection with Mr. Booth's well-known strange humors, leads directly to the door of probability.

During this sojourn of Mr. Booth in Louisville he became acquainted with a man known as George Lovett, but whose real name was Fontaine. This man, it was said, came of a very respectable family, and was well educated. For many years he had led a very dissolute life, and when about thirty years of age was arrested, tried, and condemned to be hanged for highway robbery and murder. He was in jail in Louisville, awaiting the day of execution, at the time of this visit of Mr. Booth to that city. One night Mr. Booth, returning to his hotel at a late hour, after a wild revel, was very noisy in the street, and being requested by a watchman to desist, he became abusive; and on the guardian of the night attempting to arrest him, he resisted, but was overpowered and taken to the

jail, a portion of which was then used as a guard-house, where he was locked up in a cell until morning. When left to himself, he commenced singing the popular English song of the "Poachers." This attracted the inmate of an opposite cell, the before-named George Lovett, who came to the grating of his door, and addressing Mr. Booth, soon found out who he was; said he had often seen him act, was a great admirer of his acting, and evinced so much judicious criticism that Mr. Booth was attracted by his conversation, and they talked together until daylight, when both laid down to sleep. About noon of the following day I received a note from Mr. Booth, requesting me to call on him at the jail, which I did, and found him in the same cell with Lovett. The jailer having found out who he was, had, at the request of Booth, locked him in the cell with Lovett, after searching the former to discover if he had any thing concealed that was not allowable. On my presenting myself, being well known, I was permitted to enter the same cell, where I remained nearly an hour before I could induce Mr. Booth to go away with me. In conversing with Lovett, I found him a man of fine literary taste, of considerable reading, and of general intelligence. It was a matter of wonderment to me how a man of his acquirements could permit himself to become so debased. I took Mr. Booth to my house, provided him a change of underclothing, and after a few hours sleep he arose, washed and dressed himself, and asked me to walk with him; when he took me to three or four drinking-saloons, at each of them redeeming some trifle — a ring, a knife, a gold pencil, or some other small pledge — left the night before for drinks. It was a custom with him never to have any money about him, unless when traveling, and then only enough to defray contingent expenses.

Mr. Booth left Louisville for the East before Lovett's sentence was fully carried out; but Mr. Rice, having to remain on some business, was there when Lovett was hanged. By Mr. Rice I was told that, in accordance with an agreement between the two men, Lovett's *head* was to become the property of Mr. Booth after the requirements of the law had been fulfilled. And from another person I heard that after the execution the head was severed from the body, was prepared for transmission East, was given into Mr. Rice's charge, and by him delivered to Mr. Booth at Philadelphia; and he, I heard, after putting it into a proper condition, used it on the stage for the skull of *Yorick*! "Alas! poor Yorick!"

Having seen in the public prints that a theatre in Mobile, Alabama, erected during my absence from that city, was offered

for rent, and believing I had been popular with the people there, I determined to be a bidder for the theatre of that city. As soon as this was resolved on, I set to work to get together a company, and having heard that Mr. James H. Caldwell's lease had expired on the temporary theatre in St. Louis recently occupied by him, and that it could be rented if I wished to do so, I wrote to a friend there and engaged it, the rent to commence on the 1st of the coming September. I also wrote to an old friend in Mobile, a gentleman who had the theatre there to rent, and who was administrator of the estate of the lately deceased J. Purdy Brown, and applied for a lease of that. Settling up my late business in Louisville and collecting together my company, I started for St. Louis, arriving about the last week in August, and found the so-called theatre a wretched affair, — dirty, illy contrived, and poorly provided with scenery. As soon as I could get it cleaned and painted a little I opened it to the public, early in September, with a good comedy and farce. The performances were but moderately attended, and I saw clearly my season there must necessarily be short. The weather was yet warm, and the building uncomfortable; and I saw, further, that if I got the new Mobile theatre, the season there should commence early in November.

During this short season in St. Louis I received several letters from a man of whom I shall have occasion to say much hereafter. This man was named Solomon Smith, — in after years known as, and generally called, Sol. Smith. He had been under my management for a short season at Natchez, in the spring of 1831, where, as the reader may remember, we had some unpleasant intercourse in regard to the stage business of his wife, and parted on not very agreeable terms.

He wrote to me, if I remember aright, from some point in the State of Georgia, or it may have been Northern Alabama, and, to my great surprise, proposed that we should take the Mobile theatre together, and with St. Louis form a theatrical circuit. Now, I had secured the St. Louis theatre for the following summer, and had reasonable expectations of getting the Mobile theatre. I knew that Mr. Sanford, the before-mentioned administrator, was a warm friend of mine, and I believed would give me a preference provided I would pay as much rent as another person, which I had resolved to do. These and other reasons urged upon me by my wife, who was strongly prepossessed against Mr. Smith, made me somewhat reluctant to favor his proposal, and I consequently wrote a letter giving him to understand that I did not believe we could

conduct the business to our mutual advantage. Notwithstanding, shortly after I received a letter from him, among other matters saying that, as we were both applicants for the Mobile theatre, and both favorites there, we had better join our interests in that city and St. Louis, instead of running in opposition to each other. In reflecting on this, I thought there was some truth in his remarks, and began to consider that, could we arrange matters in business so as to get along without hard feelings, or quarrelling, that perhaps it would not be a bad scheme to join our efforts. One of the great difficulties that I apprehended was that our wives were actresses, and both ambitious in regard to the characters that they performed, and I saw that on some occasions their supposed interests must clash. In the course of my professional career I had observed that jealousies among the ladies of a theatre had often extended to the gentlemen, and caused much mischief. Besides, although there are but few instances on the stage where the lines of business in acting are more dissimilar than were those of Mr. Smith and myself, — his line being *low* comedy and mine *high* comedy, — yet still we both, as a matter of necessity, had acted characters in *every* line, almost, in the entire round of the Drama, and, like many others, had little pet bits strictly not belonging to our own general line. Now, these and other difficulties presenting themselves to my mind, I wrote to Mr. Smith that I would be in Mobile on the first day of October ensuing, where, if he would meet me, we would seriously talk over the matter and try to come to terms for a partnership. This he agreed to do, saying he had intended to be in Mobile about the time I had named, and would leave the matter to be adjusted there and then.

CHAPTER XLI.

Author starts for Mobile — Reasons for taking the Mobile Theatre — Biography of Mr. Herbert — Biography of Mr. J. J. Adams — Mrs. Sharp — Author appears in two distinct Characters, viz.: the *Stranger* on the Stage, and a Policeman in the Auditorium — Biographical Sketch of Mrs. Sharp — Mr. J. H. Hackett — Mr. Tyrone Power — Biography of Tyrone Power — George H. Hill — A Benefit to the Mobile Franklin Society.

ABOUT the commencement of the last week in September, leaving my company performing in St. Louis, I started for Mobile to keep my appointment with Mr. Sol. Smith, and to arrange matters, if possible, for a lease of the theatre in that city. I arrived there about October 1st, ensuing; but Mr. Smith had not come. I immediately called on Mr. T. Sanford, the administrator on the estate of J. Purdy Brown, who had the leasing of the theatre. I stated to him what Mr. Smith's wishes were, — that he and myself should become joint lessees of the building, — and was advised by Mr. Sanford to endeavor to effect a partnership with Mr. Smith, for the reason, as he stated, that we were “both favorites with the people of Mobile, and it would be better if we pulled together;” adding, “I would like to see you act in concert, and not against each other.”

Well, I waited a week for Mr. Smith, and he not appearing or sending a letter, I asked Mr. Sanford what he thought I should do under the circumstances. His advice was “to wait another week, and if Mr. Smith neither came nor wrote, then for me to take the theatre myself, in *my own name*;” saying at the same time, “If Mr. Smith *should* come, within any reasonable time, and your situation should then permit you to receive him as a partner, you could easily do so. On the other hand, should any thing transpire to prevent the partnership, you will have the theatre, and Mr. Smith cannot blame any one, unless it be himself,” adding, further, that he “must, in justice to others, determine the point of who was to be the lessee by October 20th.” This appeared right and reasonable to me, and I waited another week, and in the interim wrote again to Mr. Smith, and directed my letter, I think, to Milledgeville, Georgia, where I supposed he might be.

At the end of the second week, not seeing nor hearing from

Mr. Smith, I took the theatre for one season only, stating to Mr. Sanford, at the time, that whenever Mr. Smith arrived, if we could arrange matters satisfactorily, I would admit him into an equal partnership with myself for the one season that I had taken the house. A few days after this event, weighing in my mind the non-appearance of Mr. Smith, I concluded that he had changed his mind in regard to the partnership, and had given up the idea of bringing Mobile into his circuit. I have had reasons within the late few years to think I was right in my conclusions at that time; these reasons I will give hereafter.

Under the influence of these impressions, I wrote to St. Louis for my company to close their season as soon as business should "drag," and proceed without delay down the Mississippi River to New Orleans, and that I would meet them there and bring them on to Mobile. As I had given up all expectation of having any additions to the company from Mr. Smith's corps, I thought it prudent to engage a few persons in order to strengthen my company for the Mobile campaign; this I did in New Orleans.

After some unexpected delay, I opened the St. Emanuel Street Theatre on December 17, 1834, with the comedy of the "Honeymoon" and the farce of the "Lottery Ticket."

I do not remember, through the long lapse of years that have ensued since 1834, what reasons Mr. Smith gave at that time for not meeting me as per appointment in the early part of October of that year. He says, in a book published by him just before his death, that it was "sickness in his family" prevented, but that he *wrote* to me. If he did, I can only say that I heard nothing from him conclusive, as regarded conditions, until long after the appointed time, and after I had been compelled to make such arrangements, by an increase of company and in other ways, as precluded the possibility of our making any money should we join our forces, thus almost doubling our expenses. This I made apparent to him, and he seemed then to think with me that it would be best for both of us to pursue each his separate course for that season; and settled it on pleasant terms, and with high hopes of the future.

Mr. Smith at that time did not seem to view the result of this *contretemps* as a matter of much importance; and for the eighteen years succeeding, in which we were partners, he never mentioned or made the least reference to the circumstance.

Mr. Smith says in his book (page 116): "I have not

named the person with whom I joined my fortunes, nor do I intend to do so. I never have thought, nor ever shall I think, his taking the theatre on his own account, to my exclusion, justifiable under any rule of fair dealing; but as I *condoned* the act by entering into partnership with him afterwards, I consider myself estopped from making any exceptions now, even were I inclined to do so." Why does he mention it, then? He could have easily left it out of his book. It seems very much like purposely knocking a man down, and then asking his pardon for having done it. I cannot but think it was an intention on his part to endeavor to place a stain on me, with an attempt to show his generosity by evincing a wish to rub it out. When a person *condones*, or, in other words, forgives a fault or wrong, among honorable men it is considered disgraceful to refer to or reproach the person with it again. I shall undertake to show, hereafter, that Mr. Smith's statement as above is unjust; that there was no real agreement between us, verbal or written, and that his failure to be a partner with me in the Mobile season of 1834-5 was his own fault, not mine.

I will observe here, that shortly after settling terms, he wrote to me that he would go to New York City for the summer; would come by the way of St. Louis; and himself and Mr. J. M. Field, then a member of his company, would like to perform a few nights with me as "stars," upon such terms as I could afford. This I agreed to, and they did perform, and afterwards both went to New York, where they acted for a few nights each.

In this season of 1834-5 my company consisted of the following performers: N. M. Ludlow, leading comedy and tragedy; J. Herbert, Sr., first comic old man; A. J. Marks, second old man; Lyne, second tragedy; J. Tryon, heavy tragedy; Madden and Kelly, low comedy; Thompson, juvenile general business; N. Johnson, Read, Walton, Henry, Barclay, Coney, Walker, J. E. Watson, Yorkshiremen and dialect men. Ladies: Mrs. Ludlow, Miss Vos, Mrs. Watson, Mrs. Minnich, Mrs. Coney, Miss Ford, and Mrs. Graham.

The company was considered a good one, and the following persons appeared as "stars" during the season, viz.: Tyrone Power, the great Irish comedian; Mrs. Sharpe, Mr. J. H. Hackett, Mrs. A. Drake, Mr. Forbes, Mr. H. J. Finn, Mr. George H. Hill, Mrs. Pritchard, Mr. Charles Webb, Mr. J. J. Adams.

Mr. Herbert, although engaged for the season, had the privilege of a *star* engagement for a few nights, during which he

performed the following characters : "Soldier's Daughter : " *Governor Heartall*, Mr. Herbert. Second night, "Speed the Plough : " *Sir Able Handy*, Mr. Herbert ; *Bob Handy*, Ludlow. Third night, the "School for Scandal : " *Sir Peter Teazle*, Mr. Herbert ; *Charles Surface*, Ludlow ; after which was performed the farce of the "Turnpike Gate : " *Crack* (with songs), Mr. Herbert. Fourth night, "Cure for the Heart-ache : " *Old Rapid*, Mr. Herbert ; *Young Rapid*, Ludlow. Fifth night, "Laugh when You Can : " *Bonus*, Mr. Herbert ; *Gossamer*. Ludlow : *Mrs. Mortimer*, Miss Vos. Sixth night, and benefit of Mr Herbert, was repeated the "School for Scandal," concluding with the farce of "Simpson & Co. : " *Mr. Simpson*, Mr. Herbert ; *Mrs. Simpson*, Miss Vos.

Mr. J. Herbert, Sr., was born in England, and must have been, at the time he was a member of my company at Mobile, at least sixty-five years of age. His acting was deficient in force and lacked spirit and energy ; nevertheless, being chaste and correct in its conception, it generally gave satisfaction, especially in old men of the quiet kind. He made his first appearance in America in 1817, on the stage at Philadelphia, but was afterwards well known and appreciated in New York and Boston. Mr. Ireland, in his "New York Stage," says that Mr. Herbert died in Boston in 1835, but this I think is a mistake ; he certainly was performing in my company until late in March of that year, and had his death occurred so soon thereafter as to come within the year, I think I should have heard of it. His son, John Herbert, Jr., was a member of my company a few years after, but he did not promise to be much of an actor at that time. He went East, and in the theatres there acquired some little credit as a low comedian. He married Miss Ellen Kent, of the theatrical family of that name. He died in New York, June 5, 1864.

January 1, 1835, we performed the comedy of the "Busybody : " *Sir Francis Gripe*, Mr. Herbert ; *Marplot*, N. M. Ludlow ; concluding the evening with the nautical drama of "Paul Jones : " *Captain Boroughcliff* (with the song of "Here's to ye Yankee Doodle"), N. M. Ludlow.

Our next "star" was Mrs. Pritchard (formerly Mrs. Tattall), who appeared January 6th in the *Widow Cheerly*, in the comedy of the "Soldier's Daughter : " and *Madame Mannelle*, in "Mischief-making," with a song and dance. Her second night, *Mary*, in the "Innkeeper's Daughter," and *Priscilla Tomboy*, in the "Romp." Third night, *Meg Merillies*, in "Guy Mannering." Fourth night, *Madge Wildfire*, in the "Heart of Midlothian : " and *Madame Mannelle*

again. Fifth night, the romantic drama of the "Brigand:" *Alessandro Massaroni*, Mrs. Pritchard, with the song of "Love's Ritornella," and a waltz in character. These were followed by *Adelgitha*, in the tragedy of the same name. And seventh and last night, for her benefit, *Elvira*, in "Pizarro," concluding with the "Brigand." This proved a profitable engagement for both "star" and manager.

Mr. Charles Webb arrived about this time in the city. He was engaged by me to perform during Mrs. Drake's engagement, and support her in some of her plays; but Mrs. D. not having arrived, an engagement was made for Mr. Webb to play on the night of Mrs. Pritchard's benefit, and he performed *Rolla* on the occasion.

Mrs. Drake still not arriving, and Mrs. Pritchard not having departed, I reengaged the latter for three nights, and a benefit on the fourth, of one-third the entire receipts,—she not claiming any consideration for her services on the other nights, and to perform two of her nights in plays selected for Mr. Webb. These plays were the tragedy of "Bertram," in which she enacted *Imogine* to his *Bertram*, and *Lady Macbeth* to his *Macbeth*. On the remaining two nights, *Letitia Hardy*, in the "Belle's Stratagem," was one, and *Massaroni*, in the "Brigand," the other.

Mrs. Drake not having met her appointment with me, and Mr. J. J. Adams arriving in the city on his way to New Orleans, he was engaged to perform two nights. His first appearance in Mobile was January 21st, as *Hamlet*: his second, as *Alexander the Great*, in Nat. Lee's tragedy of that name. The impression made by this gentleman's acting was rather favorable to him, but he never performed again in Mobile.

Mr. John Jay Adams made his first appearance on the stage at the Park Theatre, New York, on the 25th of January, 1822, as *Hamlet*; subsequently as *Rolla*, in "Pizarro;" *Othello*, *Octavian*, in the "Mountaineers;" and repeated *Rolla* for his benefit. He withdrew from the stage in 1824, but two years after returned to it. This gentleman, reared to a mercantile life, was possessed of a considerable share of histrionic abilities. He was a correct reader, had a clear, full-toned voice, and a distinct and vigorous conception of his authors; and had he been a prudent man, his career on the stage would doubtless have been a brilliant one. But he was afflicted with that fatal disease, intemperance, too frequently the companion of genius, and he passed to a premature grave in 1839.

As I have given my readers an account of the birth of my

children as they occurred, I shall now record that of my eighth and last one — my second Mary — bless her heart! My Christmas present, — born on the morning of December 25, 1834, and, thank God! still living, the mother of five children and grandmother of one.

At last the long-expected Mrs. Drake arrived, and commenced on January 22, 1835, in the character of *Bianca*, the Italian wife, in the tragedy of “Fazio; the character of *Fazio* performed by Mr. Charles Webb. Same night, the farce of “The Lady and the Devil:” *Wildlove*, N. M. Ludlow; *Zephyrina*, Miss Vos. Second night, the “Hunchback:” *Julia*, Mrs. Drake. Third night “Wives as They Were:” *Miss Dorillon*, Mrs. Drake; *Sir William Dorillon*, Mr. Webb; the night concluding with the interesting drama of “Victorine:” *Victorine*, Mrs. Drake. Fourth night, the tragedy of “Evadne:” *Evadne*, Mrs. Drake; *Ludovico*, Mr. Webb. Fifth night, J. Sheridan Knowles’s play of “The Wife:” *Marianna*, Mrs. Drake; *St. Pierre*, N. M. Ludlow; after which the farce of the “Wedding Day:” *Lady Contest*, Mrs. Drake; *Sir Adam Contest*, Mr. Herbert. Sixth night, Dimond’s play of “Adrian and Orrilla,” or the “Mother’s Vengeance:” *Madame Clermont*, Mrs. Drake; *Prince Altenberg*, Mr. Webb. Seventh night and benefit, a repetition of “Evadne,” with the farce of “Mr. H —:” *Mr. H —*, N. M. Ludlow. This ended Mrs. Drake’s engagement, and it was well received and well paid for. Mrs. Drake at this time was esteemed equal to any lady, in her lines of business, that had as yet visited the West or South.

On the 30th of January Mr. Webb had a benefit, performing for the occasion the musical drama of “Rob Roy,” enacting the grand outlaw *Rob Roy* himself, *Helen McGregor* being represented by Miss Vos; concluding with the domestic drama of “The Rent Day:” *Martin* and *Rachel Heywood*, Mr. Webb and Miss Vos. Mr. Webb was a favorite with the Mobileans, and had a good house.

Mr. Henry J. Finn arrived at this juncture; but being behind time, his engagement was limited to four nights. He commenced Wednesday evening, February 4, 1835, with the comedy of “Paul Pry,” performing the character of *Paul Pry*. He was the best in this character that we have had in America, except Mr. Thomas Hilson. His second night, the comedy of “The Poor Gentleman:” *Doctor Ollapod*, Mr. Finn; *Sir Robert Bramble*, Herbert; *Frederick*, Ludlow; *Worthington*, Webb; *Humphrey Dobbins*, Marks; *Stephen Harrowby*, Watson; *Lucretia MacTab*, Mrs. Ludlow; *Emily*,

Mrs. Watson. After which was performed "One Hundred and Two, or The Veteran:" *Philip Gaibois*, Mr. Finn. In this latter character Mr. Finn was preëminently superior to any other person I have seen attempt it. On his third night he performed *Mawworm*, in the comedy of the "Hypocrite." Here again he was ahead of any competitor. The evening concluded with the laughable farce of "The Two Shacks:" *Paul Shack*, Mr. Finn; *Peter Shack*, Mr. Watson. For his benefit and last appearance was repeated the comedy of the "Hypocrite;" the night concluding with a drama written by Mr. H. J. Finn, entitled "Kasper Hauser, or the Down-Easter," in which Mr. Finn enacted *Doctor Lott Whittle*. I do not think that Mr. Finn added any thing desirable to either his acting or his reputation as a writer by the exhibition; and yet the piece did not lack interest, but Mr. Finn was not as happy as usual; the character was not suited to his style. Although one of the best actors of the day, and generally a favorite wherever he went, he was not proportionably rewarded for his labors; he was not followed by the "thronging multitude;" his houses were respectably, but only moderately, filled.

Mrs. Sharpe, sister-in-law to J. H. Hackett, the American comedian, was our next "star." This was her first and only visit to the South, for she was not very favorably impressed by it, at least so far as Mobile is concerned. She commenced on Monday, February 9th, with the tragedy of "Frazio," in which she appeared as *Bianca*, the Italian wife; *Fazio* being represented by Mr. Webb.

On her second night she appeared as *Mrs. Haller*, in the serious drama called the "Stranger." The character of the *Stranger* was undertaken by myself, on which occasion, and "for that night only," I appeared in two very dissimilar characters,—the misanthropic *Stranger*, and a police-officer of the theatre. The circumstances producing this extraordinary exhibition were briefly these:

The theatre that I occupied this season had been built and opened in the spring of 1834, by a Mr. J. Purdy Brown, spoken of before in this book. Mr. Brown had opened it with the intention of giving equestrian and dramatic performances, combining them on the same evenings. During his management—rather mismanagement—the audiences attending those exhibitions were not the *élite* of Mobile, and were at times very uproarious, and on such occasions permitted to do pretty much as they pleased. This habit of the rougher class had arisen within the last six years; for during

those in which I had managed a theatre in that city, viz., from 1824 to 1829, the performances were attended by a class of persons as orderly and of as discriminating tastes as could be found in any city.

During the day of the evening on which we performed the "Stranger," a certain Capt. C., for many years a navigator on the Alabama River, had paid off the crew of his steamboat, and a few of them had joined together in what was called a "big spree;" that is, they were during a large portion of the day drinking in the saloons and public bar-rooms of the city, and by night were crazy through the influence of alcohol. Capt. C. being apprised of their situation, and wishing to divert them from drinking more, proposed they should all go to the *theatre* together, by which he expected to divert their minds in such a way as would tend to sober them in some degree. But on arriving there they found but little or no interest in the gloomy play of the "Stranger," and passed most of their time in the drinking-saloon, then very improperly *within* the walls of the building, and with three large doors opening on to the lobby of the second tier of boxes. The noise they made in this saloon rang through the whole building; and to make the matter worse, as the play progressed these men became more crazy, and would stand upon the seats of the second tier, and in loud tones address the actors on the stage. I sent a messenger to the audience part of the house to ascertain the reason why the police-officers were not doing their duty and removing these disturbers of the peace. The messenger returned with the report that "no police could be found in or about the theatre;" the cowardly rascals had skulked and evaded their duty. I then sent to the "guard-house" a message to the officer there to send me some assistance, and received an answer that he had no men to spare; they were, as he said, "all on duty" elsewhere. About this time the disturbance had become so past endurance that Mrs. Sharpe stopped in one of her scenes, and after an appealing look at the audience, and a stern surveying of the rioters, indignantly walked off the stage; and meeting me at the same time, said: "Mr. Ludlow, I cannot go before the audience again to-night unless those disturbers of the house are removed." I immediately walked on the stage with the intention of addressing the rioters, and demanding they should leave the house, and then calling upon the audience to sustain me in restoring quiet. As I stepped forward to speak, I heard a *whoop* and *yell* in the saloon, to which they had retreated, that would have prevented my being heard had I attempted to

speak. This so incensed me that I at once sprang from the stage to the orchestra, and with my *Stranger's* dress on rushed through the parquet, through the boxes, and up-stairs to the second tier, determined to have those men removed. As I reached the head of the stairs that landed in the lobby of the second tier, a Herculean hand grasped me by the collar, and cried "Stop!" "Mr. Ludlow if you go in there [meaning the saloon] you will be *murdered*!" I know you, but you do not know me; my name is C——d. I am a brother Mason; I sat in a lodge with you in Tuscaloosa, ten years ago. I am bound to save you. You must not say a word to those men; leave them to me. Go quietly away, and in five minutes your house shall be rid of them all." With this he gave me a sign that satisfied me, and I withdrew. As he said, in five minutes they were all gone, — taken away by him, the captain of the steamboat crew, — and the theatre was as quiet as a church. We proceeded with the play to its conclusion, which ended with great effect, the excitement having subsided.

On the day following this disturbance I had placed on the bills of the theatre, posters and house-bills, the following notice: "Wanted — *Six men* to officiate as *police-officers* in the theatre, to enforce the *rules* and *regulations* of the same, and to preserve order and decorum. The highest wages will be given for men of a proper description. Apply at the theatre from ten to two in the day." This had the desired effect. I obtained four men, who were really *men*, — two for the gallery, one for the second tier, and one for the dress-circle and parquet, — who were to act in concert whenever it might be necessary. The result was quiet and order.

Mrs. Sharpe performed afterwards *Julia*, in the "Hunchback;" *Isabella*, in the "Fatal Marriage;" and for her benefit, *Beatrice*, in "Much Ado about Nothing," and *Kate O'Brien*, in the farce of "Perfection," in which she sang several pretty songs.

Mrs. Sharpe's engagement was moderately profitable to her and to the management. This lady was the sister of Mrs. J. H. Hackett; their maiden names, Lesugg. Mrs. Hackett came to America in 1818 and Mrs. Sharpe in 1824, the latter making her first appearance at the Park Theatre, New York, on the 15th of November, in *Lady Teazle*, and *Rosina*, in the opera of that name. In both of these she was well received, although the characters were of very different *roles*. She was a tall, fine-looking woman, with dark eyes and hair, possessed of a good figure, and was altogether pleasing in her stage bearing. Although she performed various lines of business,

she was better in tragedy than that of any other; and in such characters as *Lady Macbeth*, *Elvira* in "Pizarro," *Helen McGregor* in "Rob Roy," and the like, there was seldom seen her equal.

The year following her performance in Mobile she returned to England, and appeared at Drury Lane Theatre as *Lady Macbeth*, and *Constance*, in Shakespeare's "King John," meeting with a flattering reception from her own countrymen. She remained in London but a short time, and returned to New York; appeared at the National Theatre for the benefit of Mr. Charles Kean, and shortly after became Mrs. Breevort, having, as I understand, married in 1839 Capt. Breevort, of the United States navy, and shortly after retired from the stage to private life. She died in New York City in 1863.

Mrs. Sharpe's engagement was followed by that of Mr. J. H. Hackett, who made his first appearance in Mobile, February 16, 1835, in a drama of two acts, written for him by W. B. Bernard of London, and entitled the "Kentuckian," in which Mr. Hackett performed the character of *Nimrod Wild-fire*, the Kentuckian. His second night was performed "Jonathan in England," altered from Colman's "Who Wants a Guinea?" and *Solomon Gundy*, transformed to *Solomon Swap*, a Yankee, played by Mr. Hackett; *Sir Larry McMurragh*, Ludlow. After which the farce, "Monsieur Tonson:" *Mons. Morbleu*, Mr. Hackett; *Tom King*, Ludlow. Third night, a repetition of the "Kentuckian," concluding with a Yankee farce, called "Job Fox, the Yankee Valet:" *Job Fox*, Mr. Hackett. Fourth night, Mr. Hackett in the character of *Rip Van Winkle*; the evening concluding with *Job Fox*, as before. Fifth night, "Jonathan in England," as before; concluding with "Major Jack Downing," the retired politician: *Major Jack*, Mr. Hackett. Sixth night and benefit of Mr. Hackett, Mrs. Sharpe volunteered; the entertainment commencing with—for the first time—"Jonathan Dubikins," altered from an English play and adapted to the American stage by Mr. Hackett: *Dubikins* by Mr. Hackett. After which an interlude called the "Mad Actor," in which Mr. Hackett gave imitations of Mr. Edmund Kean and Mr. Macready, the English tragedians, and Mr. Hilson and Mr. Barnes, comedians of America. After which a short piece called the "Militia Training:" *Major Joe Bunker*, Mr. Hackett; the whole concluding with the farce of "Perfection:" *Kate O'Brien*, Mrs. Sharpe; *Charles Paragon*, Ludlow.

As before stated, this was Mr. Hackett's first appearance

before the Mobile public, and they were highly pleased with his various performances. He certainly was an uncommonly clever actor at that time, considering the wide range of characters that he assumed; and having not then seen Mr. Marble or Mr. George Hill in Yankees, Mr. Hackett's representation of them was to me exceedingly funny. I never enjoyed any performance of the comic kind more than I did his *Major Joe Bunker*. He was equally good in the old Frenchman, *Mons. Morbleu*. Mr. Hackett's engagement was profitable to him and the management.

The next star that illumed our Mobile stage, and one of the brightest of the bright, was Tyrone Power, the great delineator of Irish characters; an *artist*,—one that has never been equalled on the boards of our American theatres in his peculiar rôle. He performed with us in the month of February, 1835, commencing the 24th with one of his peculiar pieces, entitled "Born to Good Luck," in which he enacted *Paudeen O'Rafferty*. I shall never forget the clear ring of his melodious voice, behind the scenes, when he gave us a verse of the "Boys of Kilkenny," to the old, sweet tune of the "Vale of Avoca;" and the greeting he received as he entered, the very embodiment of the gay, good-hearted, rollicking Irish boy. There were a considerable number of Irish and English gentlemen in the theatre, who were in ecstasies, and extended their applause almost beyond a reasonable time.

On his second night, Mr. Power performed *Dennis Brulgruddery*, in the comedy of "John Bull;" *Hon. Tom Shuffleton*, N. M. Ludlow; *Dan*, Watson; *Job Thornberry*, Herbert; *Peregrine*, Webb; *Lady Caroline*, Miss Vos. Third night, Mr. Power appeared as *Sir Patrick O'Plenipo*, in the "Irish Ambassador," and highly delighted the audience by his inimitable importance and deep discernment of subjects that he knew nothing about. The fourth night, he enacted *Teddy the Tiler*, and *Terry O'Rourke* in the "Irish Tutor." The fifth night, he repeated "Born to Good Luck." Sixth night, and benefit, he performed the Irish comedy of the "Nervous Man and the Man of Nerve;" *McShane* (the man of nerve), Mr. Power; after which *Terry O'Rourke* in the "Irish Tutor."

Mr. Power's engagement was a brilliant one, and highly successful in every respect. By request he performed one extra night, given by the management to the newly established "Franklin Society," a literary association of Mobile. I can truly say that never did an audience part with an actor with more reluctance. But Mr. Power had other engage-

ments, demanding immediate attention, and he could not stay longer with us. The death of this highly talented gentleman occurred about six years after this engagement in Mobile, the first and only opportunity I had of witnessing his wonderfully clever histrionic abilities. As he was a man well known and universally admired by the theatre-going people of America, I have no doubt I shall gratify many by giving a somewhat extended notice of him. His career in the United States, though short, was brilliant; but brief as it was, he won the hearts of all those that had the opportunity of witnessing his extraordinary professional abilities or enjoying the pleasure of his social qualities. I believe I have witnessed the efforts of all the noted delineators of Irish character that have appeared upon our American stage,—Messrs. — Hudson, John Collins, Barney Williams, W. J. Florence, and others whose names do not occur to me at this time,—but, taking into consideration the different shades of Irish character that have passed in review before me on the stage, I am compelled to say, having a due reverence for truth, that in my humble opinion Mr. Power has not been equalled by any one that I have seen. His *Dennis*, in “John Bull,” was an unexaggerated picture of low Irish cunning and humor; while his *Sir Patrick O’Plenipo* was equally as true of the dashing, impulsive, polished man of good society.

Witnessing Mr. Power’s performance of these two characters, on different nights, few would recognize the same man as the representative of both. Then his impudence and “brass” in *Terry O’Rourke* was a fine contrast to his representation of the brave, merry Irish boy, *Paudeen O’Rafferty*.

Tyrone Power was born in the county of Waterford, Ireland, November 2, 1797, and made his first appearance on any stage at the Isle of Wight in 1815, as *Alonzo*, in “Pizarro.” In 1817 he opened in Dublin as *Romeo* and *Jeremy Diddler*. In 1818 he retired from the stage until 1822, when he made his first appearance in London, at the Olympic Theatre. Soon after, he appeared at Covent Garden as *Rolando* in the “Honeymoon.” At this theatre he played, for the first time, an original Irish character, viz., *O’Shaughnessy*, in the “Hundred-Pound Note.” This gave the English public the first idea that they had of his capability to perform Irish characters. But it was not until the return from his first visit to America that they came to the conclusion he was the ablest representative of Irishmen then on the British stage; and his representation was the climax of a victory.

His first visit to the United States was in 1833, on which occasion he opened at the Park Theatre, New York, August 28th, as *Sir Patrick O'Plenipo* and *Teddy the Tiler*. He afterward performed *Dennis Brulgruddery*, *Major O'Flaherty*, *McShane*, and other characters, in all of which Mr. Power made a most favorable impression, and eclipsing all former representatives of Irish characters in the United States. It was during this visit to America he made his tour through the Southern cities of Charleston, Mobile, and New Orleans. In the latter his performances were received with unqualified marks of approbation. Mr. Power revisited America in 1836, and continued to receive constant evidence of warm private friendship and high public approbation. His last appearance in the United States was in New York, at the Park Theatre, on the 9th of March, 1841, as *Gerald Pepper* and *Morgan Rattler*. On the 10th, he embarked, in high spirits, on board the ill-fated steamship *President*, and vessel or passenger was never heard of more.

His son, Maurice Power, played at the Park Theatre in 1848, but was not successful.

The next "star" with us was Mr. George H. Hill, the Yankee comedian, who commenced March 5th with a piece written expressly for him by Mr. J. S. Jones, and entitled the "Green Mountain Boy:" *Jedediah Homebred*, Mr. Hill; after which was performed "Catharine and Petruchio:" *Petruchio*, N. M. Ludlow; *Catharine*, Miss Vos. His second night, "Jonathan Doubikins:" *Doubikins*, Mr. Hill. This was the same piece performed by Mr. Hackett, into which Mr. Hill introduced some Yankee stories, among them "Jonathan's Courtship of Nancy Slocum and Sal Barter," and the disaster of the "punking pie;" these considerably increased the fun of the piece. On Mr. Hill's third night was performed one of his peculiar pieces, entitled the "Yankee Peddler:" *Zachariah Dickerwell*, Mr. Hill, in which he sung the comic song of "I Guess I Knows." Fourth night was performed an American comic opera written by Samuel Woodworth, author of the "Old Oaken Bucket" and other popular poems. Music by John Davies. In this piece Mr. Hill performed *Jonathan Ploughboy*, which he made a decided "down-east" Yankee. When this piece was first produced at the Chatham Theatre, New York, the part of *Jonathan* was performed by Aleck Simpson, who made the part (October, 1825) simply a comic New Jersey boy, without any of the more eastern peculiarities. Fifth night of Mr. Hill was performed a play written for him by J. Augustus Stone (author of "Metamora" and other

dramas), entitled "The Knight of the Golden Fleece," in which Mr. Hill performed a Yankee character called *Sy Saco*, which elicited much applause. The piece pleased, and was repeated for Mr. Hill's benefit. His engagement was profitable, and he left a very favorable impression with the Mobileans.

It was about time now for me to draw my season to a close, and I began to think of the benefits. I have already mentioned that before Mr. Power left Mobile he performed one night for the benefit of the Mobile Franklin Society, the object of which was to buy books as a commencement to a public library, and the proceeds of this benefit afforded something as a beginning to the same. This, and some other little contributions which I was enabled to make to the society, was courteously acknowledged by making me an honorary member for life of this literary institution. A short time before this, Mr. Richard Jones, scenic artist of the theatre, took a benefit, and appeared on the stage as an actor in one of the pieces of the night. The comedy selected for the occasion was the "Heir at Law;" *Doctor Pangloss*, N. M. Ludlow; *Lord Duberly*, Herbert. Between the play and farce Mr. Jones appeared and sang the song of "Old Towler," which was followed by Dibden's sea-song of "Ben Block," by Mr. Finlay, a private citizen of Mobile at the time, but a member several years before of my company. The entertainments of the evening concluded with the comic opera of "No Song, No Supper," in which Mr. Jones performed the part of *Robin*, a sailor. His benefit was well attended. The theatre closed about the middle of April, 1835, the benefits being generally good, and the season moderately profitable to the manager.

CHAPTER XLII.

St. Louis Season of 1835 — Mrs. Pritchard — Mr. Hosack — Sol. Smith — J. M. Field — M. C. Field — Final Arrangement of Partnership — Mr. Spencer — Mr. Mason — Mrs. Hamblin — Miss Eliza Riddle — Mrs. Cowell — Mr. Cowell — C. Keemle as *Lieut. Worthington* — John C. La Rue — Biography of Mrs. Hamblin.

I COMMENCED my following season in St. Louis early in May. The first "star" was Mrs. Pritchard, who began about the 1st of July, and concluded with her benefit on the 10th of the same month. Her first piece was the "Wandering Boys:" *Paul*, Mrs. Pritchard; *Justin*, Mrs. Minnich; *Count De Croissy*, N. M. Ludlow; after which was performed the "Wreck Ashore," in which the husband of Mrs. Pritchard, Mr. Hosack, appeared under the name of Pritchard, in the character of *Marmaduke Magog*. Luckily he was announced "for this night only," for the gentleman's success was not of that degree to make his second appearance desirable.

During the progress of Mrs. Pritchard's engagement, Mr. Sol. Smith and Mr. J. M. Field had been underlined in the bills of the theatre to perform a limited engagement, each to appear on alternate nights. Mr. Smith opened Saturday evening, July 11, 1835, as *Mawworm*, in the comedy of the "Hypocrite," and *Philip Garbois*, in the farce of "102." On the Monday following, Mr. Joseph M. Field made his first appearance in St. Louis as *Richard III.*, in Shakespeare's tragedy of that name. The next night Mr. Sol. Smith appeared as *Martin Heywood*, in the "Rent Day," and *Delph*, in the farce of "Family Jars." This was followed on the next night by Mr. Field in *Reuben Glenroy*, and Mr. Sol. Smith as *Kit Cosey*, in "Town and Country;" concluding the same with the farce of "My Aunt:" Mr. Field as *Dashall*. Next night comedy of "Wild Oats:" *Rover*, Mr. Field; concluding with the farce of the "Three and Deuce:" the *Three Singles*, Mr. Sol. Smith. The next night was Mr. Sol. Smith's benefit, when was performed, for the first piece, "Charles II.:" Mr. Smith as *Captain Copp*, and Mr. Field as the *Merry Monarch*; concluding with the farce of the "Illustrious Stranger:" *Bowbell*, Mr. Sol. Smith. Monday, July 20th, benefit of Mr. J.

M. Field, there was performed Massinger's celebrated play of "A New Way to Pay Old Debts:" *Sir Giles Overreach*, Mr. J. M. Field; *Justice Greedy*, Mr. Sol. Smith; *Wellborn*, M. M. Ludlow; *Lord Lovell*, Mr. M. C. Field; *Allworth*, Mr. Thompson; *Marall*, Mr. Watson; *Meg Overreach*, Mrs. Watson; *Lady Allworth*, Mrs. Ludlow. Between the play and farce, a comic medley was sung by Mr. Sol. Smith. The night's entertainment concluded with a satirical sketch by Mr. J. M. Field, entitled "Tourists in America:" *Tristram Doggrel*, Mr. J. M. Field; *Master Diogenes*, Mr. Sol. Smith; *Phoebe*, Mrs. Watson. This benefit was remunerative to Mr. Field.

Those of my readers who may retain a recollection of the histrionic abilities of Mr. Sol. Smith will hardly fail to smile at the idea of his undertaking such characters as the sentimental *Martin Heywood* and the gay and dashing *Three Singles*; nor can they fail to be surprised that Mr. J. M. Field ever essayed to perform *Richard III.* or *Sir Giles Overreach*; but this latter gentleman was just about that time beginning to think he was equal to any part in the round of the Drama. He afterwards settled down to what he really was clever in, — eccentric comedy. His *Dashall*, in the farce of "My Aunt;" his *Jeremy Diddler*, in "Raising the Wind;" *Sir Benjamin Backbite*, in the "School for Scandal;" *Flutter*, in the "Belle's Stratagem;" *Don Cæsar de Bazan*, *Rover*, in "Wild Oats," and like characters, were equalled by few, if any, in this country.

Mr. Sol. Smith and Mr. J. M. Field, immediately after their benefits, started for the East, each performing for a few nights in New York and Philadelphia.

During this short time that Mr. Smith was in St. Louis, all the conditions were finally adjusted between him and myself for a partnership, on equal terms, that lasted without intermission for *eighteen years*. It commenced with the following fall season at Mobile, in compliance with the wishes of Mr. Smith, who wished to test his dramatic metal on the metropolitan stage in the interim. Mr. J. M. Field was engaged by us, also to commence in Mobile.

About the middle of July, a young Englishman named Spencer was engaged by me as a stock actor. He was a person of gentlemanly manners, and possessed tolerable vocal abilities. I afforded him the privilege of appearing as a "star" for four nights, and gave him a portion of the receipts of the last night. He appeared on the 21st of July as *Henry Bertram*, in "Guy Mannering," and in the farce of the "Poor Soldier,"

as *Patrick*. Second night, as *Jocoso* in "Clari, the Maid of Milan," and *Captain Sommerville*, in the farce of "Turn Out." The third night, he appeared in the nautical drama of "Black-Eyed Susan," and sang the popular song of "All in the Downs," and in the concluding piece, the comic opera of "No Song, no Supper," as *Frederick*, he sang the "Bay of Biscay," also then popular. The fourth night, for his benefit, he appeared as *Francis Osbaldistone*, in "Rob Roy."

This young man was no actor, and only a tolerable singer; but he was a high-toned, honorable gentleman, courteous and brave, and, a few years after this engagement, died like a hero, fighting by the side of the valiant Col. Fannin, in Mexico.

Our next "stars" were Mr. Charles K. Mason, who had arrived in America only the fall previous, and Mrs. Hamblin, wife of Thomas Hamblin, for many years manager of the Bowery Theatre, New York. This lady and gentleman arriving about the same time, agreed to perform on alternate nights. Mr. Mason commenced Friday evening, July 31st, in *Hamlet*. The next evening, Mrs. Hamblin appeared in *Letitia Hardy*, and *Colin* (the youth who had never seen a woman), in the farce of "Nature and Philosophy." On Mr. Mason's second night, he appeared as *Sir Edward Mortimer*, in the "Iron Chest," and *Napoleon*, in a one act drama of that name. Mrs. Hamblin, on her second night, performed *Mrs. Haller*, in the "Stranger," and *Zephyrina*, in the farce of the "Lady and the Devil." On Mr. Mason's third night, he performed *Macbeth*. On her third night, Mrs. Hamblin performed *Lady Elizabeth Freeloze*, in the "Day After the Wedding:" *Colonel Freeloze*, Ludlow; after which a drama in three acts, entitled "Victorine, or I'll Sleep on it:" *Victorine*, Mrs. Hamblin. Mr. Mason's fourth night was Schiller's "Robbers:" *Charles De Moor*, Mr. Mason; after which the "Rent Day:" *Martin Heywood*, Mr. Mason. On Mrs. Hamblin's fourth night was performed the comedy of "The Will, or School for Daughters:" *Albina Mandevill*, Mrs. Hamblin. Monday, August 10th, was Mr. Mason's benefit, when was performed a kind of dramatic *mélange*, consisting of an act, or part of an act, from different plays, viz., the third act of "Julius Caesar," embracing the assassination of *Julius Caesar* and the orations of *Brutus* and *Mark Antony*; *Mark Antony*, Mr. Mason; *Cassius*, N. M. Ludlow; *Brutus*, M. C. Field; after which an act of "A New Way to Pay Old Debts:" *Sir Giles Overreach*, Mr. Mason; following which the fifth act of the "Hunchback:" *Master Walter*, Mr. Mason. This was succeeded by the fifth act of "Richard III.:" *Richard*, Mr.

Mason ; concluding with the little drama entitled " Napoleon," as before. Notwithstanding the supposed strength of this bill of entertainment, the theatre was not overcrowded. The next night was the benefit of Mrs. Hamblin, the performance Knowles's play of the " Wife, or my Father's Grave : " *St. Pierre*, Mr. Mason ; *Marianna*, Mrs. Hamblin. After which a recitation, by Mrs. Hamblin, of " Belles, Have at ye All." Mr. Mason gave Burns's " Tam O 'Shanter," and Mr. Ludlow " A Dissertation on Faults." Mrs. Hamblin's receipts were greater than the night before, but not equal to her talents as an actress.

Wishing to give this party another chance, and finding they were gaining in the estimation of the public, they were re-engaged for a few nights to perform, both in the same plays. They commenced August 13th, with " Romeo and Juliet," with Mr. Mason and Mrs. Hamblin in the two title characters ; *Mercutio*, Ludlow. This was an unfortunate selection for the lady, for although not old, yet she had too many years over her head to look like the tender, blooming girl of Shakespeare's creation ; and Mr. Mason, although not old in years, was too matured in appearance to look like the love-sick boy, *Romeo*. With heavy black eyebrows, and a face, though shaven clean, bearing evidence of a heavy black beard, he looked more like the sanguinary *Tybalt* than any other character in the play. The second night, their selection was Mrs. Centlivre's comedy of the " Wonder, a Woman Keeps a Secret : " *Don Felix*, Mr. Mason ; *Donna Violante*, Mrs. Hamblin. I never was an admirer of Mr. Mason's *light* comedy : it was always to me *heavy* comedy. I could not make light of it.

Next night, Colman's play of the " Mountaineers : " *Octavian* (the insane lover), Mr. Mason ; *Agnes*, Mrs. Hamblin, with the original music. The evening concluded with " Catharine and Petruchio," Mrs. Hamblin and Mr. Mason in the title rôles. Next night, the " Merchant of Venice : " *Shylock*, Mr. Mason ; *Portia*, Mrs. Hamblin ; *Gratiano*, Ludlow. Next night, the nautical drama of the " Water Witch : " *Seadrift*, Mrs. Hamblin ; concluding the night with " Napoleon," as before. Next night was a repetition of the " Wonder" and the " Water Witch," both as before.

The next night, benefit of Mr. Mason, Knowles's play of the " Wife," as before, with a *mélange* of songs and recitations. The following and last night of these two performers, for the benefit of Mrs. Hamblin, the comedy of the " Belle's Stratagem : " *Letitia Hardy*, Mrs. Hamblin ; *Doricourt*, Ludlow ; concluding with three acts of the " Robbers : " *Charles*

De Moor, Mr. Mason. Thus terminated this double engagement, and with very little profit to any body. Then followed some benefits for the stock performers, very few of which were productive of profits to the beneficiaries. After the benefits were over, some stock performances were given, with very little better results; the weather was too hot, and the house uncomfortable. Mrs. Pritchard returned about the middle of September and played six nights, going through her usual round of characters, but not to very good business.

On the 28th of September, Miss Eliza Riddle made her first appearance before the St. Louis public as *Julia*, in Knowles's play of the "Hunchback," and at once established herself a favorite, which afterwards, as Mrs. J. M. Field, was continued up to her final return to the East in 1856. On her second night she appeared as *Juliet*, in "Romeo and Juliet;" the *Romeo* of the night being Mr. M. C. Field, her afterwards brother-in-law. Her third night, *Miss Dorrillon*, in the comedy of "Wives as they Were, and Maids as They Are," and *Colin*, in "Nature and Philosophy." Her fourth night, *Belvidera*, in the tragedy of "Venice Preserved;" *Pierre*, N. M. Ludlow; *Jaffier*, M. C. Field; after which the farce of the "Wedding Day;" *Lady Contest*, Miss Riddle. The next night, Millman's tragedy of "Fazio, or the Italian Wife;" *Bianca*, Miss Riddle; *Fazio*, Mr. M. C. Field. Next night, the "Somnambulist" (the drama): *Ernestine*, Miss Riddle; after which the "Idiot Witness;" *Walter Arlington*, Miss Riddle. On this occasion Mr. Hernizen, engaged as a stock actor, made his first appearance before a St. Louis audience in the character of *Colin de Trop*, in the "Somnambulist," and *Gilbert*, in the "Idiot Witness." This gentleman became a favorite low comedian afterwards in the West and South. Monday, October 5th, was Miss Riddle's benefit, on which occasion she performed *Mrs. Beverly*, in Moore's tragedy of the "Gamester;" after which was performed for the second time the "Wedding Day," as before. Miss Riddle had a crowded house for her benefit, and at once started on a long career of success with the St. Louis play-going public.

Mrs. A. Drake followed Miss Riddle, and commenced with *Bianca*, in "Fazio;" on succeeding nights, *Mrs. Haller*, in the "Stranger;" *Isabella*, in the "Fatal Marriage;" *Eugenia*, in the "Foundling of the Forest;" *Millwood*, in "George Barnwell;" *Annette*, in the "Maid and Magpie;" and *Widow Cheerly*, in the "Soldier's Daughter;" and for her last night and benefit, the "Hunchback;" *Julia*, in the play, and

Zephyrina, in the farce of the "Lady and the Devil," by Mrs. Drake.

About this time, my wife, who never liked the profession of the stage, earnestly importuned me to consent to her withdrawal from it, urging that her duty to her children, now numerous, required her undivided attention. Seeing the entire truth of this, it was agreed that the season now drawing to a close should be the last of her professional career. On the 13th of October, 1835, she took her farewell benefit at the old theatre in which we were then performing, standing on Second Street between Olive and Locust streets. That night was the first appearance of Mrs. Cowell (wife of Joseph Cowell) in St. Louis, on which occasion Mrs. A. Drake and Miss Riddle volunteered their services. The play was "*Adrian and Orrilla*" (by Dimond). Mrs. Drake performed *Madame Clermont*; Miss Riddle, the page *Lothaire*; Mrs. Cowell *Orrilla*; and Mrs. Ludlow, *Githa*. Afterwards, the farce of "Perfection:" *Kate O'Brien*, Mrs. Cowell; *Charles Paragon*, N. M. Ludlow. The house was full to overflowing. Mrs. Ludlow continued to play until the end of the season, about ten nights more.

Mr. and Mrs. Cowell were engaged for the coming Mobile season as stock performers, and the first made his *début* before a St. Louis audience October 15th, in the comedy of the "Belle's Stratagem," as *Flutter*; *Doricourt*, N. M. Ludlow; *Letitia Hardy*, Mrs. Cowell; *Widow Rackett*, Mrs. Ludlow; the evening concluding with the "Turnpike Gate," Mr. Cowell in his renowned character of *Crack*, in which he was justly celebrated. Next night, Mr. Cowell performed *Matty Marvelous*, in the "Miller's Maid;" Mrs. Cowell in the character of *Phæbe, the Miller's Maid*. After which the farce of "Turn Out:" *Gregory*, Mr. Cowell; *Marian Ramsey*, Mrs. Cowell. This was followed the next night with *Paul Pry*, by Mr. Cowell; *Phæbe*, Mrs. Cowell. After which was performed the "Dead Shot:" *Timid*, Mr. Cowell; *Louisa Lovetrick*, Mrs. Cowell. Mrs. Cowell had a benefit on the 20th of October, commencing with "Perfection," in which she performed *Kate O'Brien*; after which the "Happiest Day of my Life:" *Mr. Gilman*, Mr. Cowell; *Sophia*, Mrs. Cowell; and ending with the melodrama of the "Miller and His Men:" *Karl*, Mr. Cowell; *Lothaire*, Ludlow; *Claudine*, Mrs. Cowell. Miss Riddle appeared again, and performed *Lady Teazle*, in the "School for Scandal," on which occasion her brother William (who was engaged in the company) per-

formed *Sir Peter Teazle*; *Charles Surface*, N. M. Ludlow; *Joseph Surface*, Mr. M. C. Field; *Mrs. Candour*, Mrs. Ludlow; *Maria*, Mrs. Minnich. On the last night but one of the season, I put up my own name for a benefit, and was rewarded with a full house, the entertainments consisting of the comedy of the "Poor Gentleman," on which occasion Col. Charles Keemle, a citizen of St. Louis, and a friend of mine for many years, performed for this one night only. The principal characters were cast as follows: *Lieut. Worthington*, Col. Keemle; *Sir Robert Bramble*, Mr. Riddle; *Frederick Bramble*, N. M. Ludlow; *Doctor Ollapod*, Joe Cowell; *Sir Charles Cropland*, Spencer; *Stephen Harrowby*, Hernizen; *Emily Worthington*, Miss Riddle; *Miss Lucretia MacTab*, Mrs. Ludlow; *Mary*, Mrs. Minnich; *Dame Harrowby*, Mrs. Milton. The evening concluded with a romantic drama, founded on Southey's poem entitled "Thalaba, the Destroyer." The whole entertainment was greeted with much applause, and Col. Keemle conducted himself more like a veteran than a new recruit going through his third drill. The following night, and the last of the season, was for the benefit of Miss Riddle, on which occasion was performed Knowles' play of the "Wife, or My Father's Grave:" *St. Pierre*, N. M. Ludlow; *Marianna* (the wife), Miss Riddle.

The company that I had this season was a very efficient one, embracing a large amount of talent. They were as follows: N. M. Ludlow, M. C. Field, Joseph Cowell, William Riddle, George Hernizen, J. E. Watson, N. Johnson, Spencer, Thompson, Barclay, Wolfe, Williams, Kelly, Morris, La Rue, Edgerton, and occasionally Sam Cowell, then a small boy: Miss Eliza Riddle, Mrs. Ludlow, Mrs. Cowell, Mrs. Watson, Mrs. Minnich, Miss Stannard, Mrs. Johnson, and Mrs. Milton.

Mr. and Mrs. Watson left the company about the middle of the season; so did Mr. Johnson and Miss Stannard, a little later. The two former wished to go East. Mr. Johnson was dissatisfied with the business given him to perform. Mrs. Johnson, his wife, was left with us until the close of the season. Miss Stannard, an excellent woman, had perhaps been a clever actress at one time in her life,—beyond the memory of the generation in which she lived,—but now unfit by age or talents to perform the business to which she aspired.

In the above list of persons there was one man whose brief career I feel tempted to give some account of; not that he had any eminence on the stage, but for the purpose of showing how one can mistake his vocation, and afterwards find its true channel and progress in it. That person was John C.

La Rue, a young man that appeared to have been liberally educated, but becoming stage-smitten, rushed into histrionic life without inquiring whether he had one natural requisite for so difficult an undertaking. Mr. La Rue was small in stature, thin and angular in make, light blue, inexpressive eyes, and so near-sighted that he was obliged to wear spectacles constantly; yet this young man thought, at one period of his life, that he could become a great *tragedian*. He was with my company, I believe, nearly two years; every night employed on the stage, and yet could never overcome a nervous timidity that possessed him, sufficiently to allow him to deliver before the public a speech of a dozen lines without halting, stammering, or coming to a dead stop. I endeavored to cure him of this fault, and had hopes at one time that use would finally bring about the desired result; but the disease, for it surely was a disease, foiled our joint efforts. During the winter season of Mobile, 1834-5, he was cast for *Orozembo*, in the play of "Pizarro," an old Peruvian *cacique*, who has to deliver a lengthy speech to the Spanish officers. I cautioned him to get very perfect in the words, that he might not be embarrassed on that account, and at rehearsal he was so; but on the stage, at night, he lost command of himself, and came to an entire stand-still. He failed to take the word from the prompter, and finally backed himself off the stage, and as soon as out of sight of the audience endeavored to dash his brains out against the brick wall of the theatre. I really pitied the young man. His inability to do any thing more than deliver a message reduced his salary to that low grade as hardly to afford him a decent living. During the summer season of 1835 — as contained in this chapter — his clothes had become threadbare, and hardly creditable to the profession; so the young men of the company, who generally liked La Rue, clubbed their small amounts and bought him a suit of clothes, which was presented to him at a private meeting held by them in the green-room of the theatre. Mr. M. C. Field was selected to present the suit of clothes, and deliver a speech addressed to him at the same time. This was done in a grandiloquent, serio-comic strain, and replied to by Mr. La Rue in a similar style of eloquence, and with much wit and pertinence. Now, it was a singular fact that this young man could make a clever extemporaneous speech, using his own language, without a fault; but as soon as he undertook to deliver the ideas or language of another person, he became confused and painfully nervous. The presumption was that his *memory* was not tenacious or ready at command. The morning following the

presentation, when La Rue entered the green-room, there were many congratulations on his improved appearance; and after rehearsal another private meeting of the parties to the gift, when La Rue proposed that the old suit should be *buried*, with due honors and due solemnity, under the stage. So the clothes were brought, and after being enclosed in a small box, and inscribed, "*La Rue — Thespis, Defuns., A. D. 1835. Vade in pace!*" a hole was dug, a procession formed, and the box deposited in the earth. Over it was then offered up a prayer to Melpomene and Thalia, by a member of the company, beseeching them to prevent all poor devils of actors from coming to such a melancholy end as the one there laid to rest; after which they all retired — and took a drink!

La Rue went down the Mississippi River with the company as far as New Orleans, where he left us and the stage forever. I neither saw nor heard of him for about ten years, when one day I accidentally met him in the office of one of the leading newspapers in New Orleans, and learned that he was in some way connected with that paper, perhaps one of its editors. It appeared, on quitting the stage in New Orleans, he found a friend and patron in Col. Preston, a leading lawyer of that city, with whom he studied *law*, afterwards became, I believe, a partner with that gentleman, and finally he became a judge in one of the city courts. He was also a prominent politician in that city for a number of years, and died, as I think, a short time prior to our civil war.

As I shall, in all probability, have no occasion to speak again of Mrs. Hamblin in this narrative, and as she was for a time somewhat conspicuous in the Drama of the West and South, I would like to give a slight sketch of her life. Her maiden name was Blanchard, daughter of William Blanchard, a well-known London actor, who for years was highly popular in his profession as a comedian. Elizabeth Blanchard was born in London, about 1805. In 1823 or 1824 she married Thomas S. Hamblin, then a rising young actor on the London stage. They came to America in 1825, and appeared at the Park Theatre, New York, in the fall of that year. Mr. Hamblin was a gay and dissolute man, and the married life of this young couple was stormy and unpleasant. She, in time, obtained a divorce from him, and in lieu of her awarded alimony accepted the sum of \$3,000, with which she commenced management. She at one time had the Petersburg Theatre, Virginia; afterwards the Richmond Hill Theatre, New York. About the year 1836 she married a young man, a member of her company, named James S. Charles, with whom she lived

many years. But her life soon became unsettled and rambling, wandering from town to town in pursuit of an occupation that was every year becoming less productive of profit to her. She was a lady possessing considerable versatility of talent in her profession, but not decidedly great in any one way. After ten or twelve years of an erratic life in the West and South, she died in New Orleans of cholera during the spring of 1849, aged about forty-four years.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Commencement of Partnership — Mr. Barton — Mr. and Mrs. Tiernan — Miss Vos — Biography of Mr. and Mrs. Tiernan — Miss Phillips — George H. Hill — Mme. Celeste — Mr. Mason and Sister — Jim Crow Rice — Clara Fisher — Mr. Finn.

ABOUT this time I took a partner in business. I shall not follow his example, and endeavor to sink in oblivion the name of a partner whose acts, conjointly with my own, were the means of procuring for the firm an honorable reputation and a reasonable competency.

The name of my partner was Solomon Smith, familiarly known as "Sol. Smith," whom I shall hereafter designate as Sol. Smith, Sr., in order that in after years he shall not be confounded with the present Sol. Smith, his son.

Mr. Sol. Smith, Sr., has given to the world *in his own name*, and after his own peculiar style, a history, such as it is, of the years wherein Ludlow & Smith were managers of several of the principal theatres west and south of the Alleghany Mountains.

Mr. Smith was aware for many years of my intention to give to the public a history of the Drama of the West and South. He had heard me say that I had, as early as 1816, pledged my word to Mr. William Dunlap, author of the "American Stage" (up to about 1813), that if I continued in the profession for any great number of years, I would at some later period record and publish what I knew in regard to theatricals in the valley of the Mississippi. This pledge was given through Mr. Lambdin, miniature-painter, a friend of Mr. Dunlap and of myself. In his book Mr. Smith has to some extent anticipated my labors. This, perhaps, by some might seem, under a partial view of it, a very generous act on his part; and had he at the same time been just as well as generous, I might have viewed it in a different light from what I now do.

In consideration of these facts, little remains for me to do, as far as concerns the theatres of Ludlow & Smith, other than to correct misstatements made by Mr. S. Smith, and to record some facts connected with the general history of the

Drama in the Mississippi Valley, which, in my opinion, he has designedly passed over in silence, and endeavored to cover with a mantle of obscurity. I will state here that Mr. Smith and myself were partners, as the firm of Ludlow & Smith, for eighteen years; that I established the circuit we managed; that I took Mr. Sol. Smith as a partner in the fall of 1835; and from that date until the spring of 1853, when the firm was dissolved by mutual consent, there was never an important transaction of the firm without my suggestion or concurrence.

In the statements which I am about to make, and which I feel I should make in self-defence, I shall be compelled to speak of private differences between Mr. Smith and myself that I would fain have kept from the public eye.

Mr. Sol. Smith, Sr., in a book published a short time prior to his death, which occurred February 14, 1869, has made certain unjust charges against me; so contrived that, without mentioning my name, they could do me much injury, yet not render him liable in a prosecution for slander. Those unjust statements of his I feel it a duty in me to expose, and I shall do so as the occasions come up in the progress of this work.

I will just remark here, as antecedent matter, that Mr. Smith says in his book (p. 103): "The season in Montgomery this year [1834] commenced on the 16th of January. The celebrated George Holland joined me in the management, and the firm was Smith & Holland." Here he takes a partner, Mr. Holland, and only a few months prior to the time that he claims to have settled a partnership with me. Again, at page 104 of his book, he says: "At Montgomery, to begin with, we played two weeks; at Columbus, four; Macon, six; and then proceeded to Augusta, at the earnest request of many of the most respectable citizens. Here I leased the theatre for one year." In five months after taking Mr. Holland as a partner, and two months after taking the Augusta theatre for a *year*, he began a correspondence with *me* for a *partnership*, provided I got the Mobile theatre. What, then, was to become of Mr. Holland and the Augusta theatre? Neither of them were mentioned to me. He knew my circuit would be Mobile and St. Louis, and that Augusta could not be brought in, being entirely out of the line of travel between the above two cities. But Mr. Smith's plan was, if I got the Mobile theatre, as he thought it likely I would, and we came to terms for a partnership, why then he would throw Holland "overboard," as he says I did him; and getting rid of his company, except such as I might be willing to engage for the firm, join

our interests in the Mobile and St. Louis theatres. That he thought I would get the Mobile theatre may be inferred from these lines of his book, page 116: "I entertained a foolish idea that the person who had established the Drama in Mobile, [meaning me] and who had been driven from the field by fire and bad seasons, had a sort of preëmption right to the city." When Mr. Smith ultimately ascertained that I had got the theatre, he found it was not an easy matter to throw Mr. Holland "overboard," nor to shake off certain performers engaged for a definite time, yet unexpired; so he concluded it was more to his interest to fulfil his engagements to his present company, and letting his appointment with me go by default, trust to arranging matters with me the following spring. Now, had I anticipated such charges against me in regard to the Mobile season of 1834-5, I should have been prepared to prove what I have stated above, directly, from testimony of Mr. J. M. Field, then a member of his company. But Mr. Field died January 28, 1856, and Mr. Smith's book containing this charge against me appeared in print during the summer or fall of 1868; but I had no knowledge of its contents until the closing of the year 1868, when a friend who had read the book informed me; andt his was the first intimation that reached me from any source that Mr. Smith entertained ill-feelings towards me in regard to these transactions of 1834.

In Mr. Thaddeus Sanford, of Mobile, I would have had a witness of the statement I have made in relation to the renting of the theatre. He was the gentleman that leased the building to me. I met him in Mobile in the latter part of January, 1867, but was subsequently told that he died during the summer or fall of that year, about twelve months previous to the publication of Mr. Smith's book. No man of any dignity of character or manly feelings would have entered into partnership with another who had acted in the way that he asserts I did. He would naturally have expected to be cheated again by such a man, the first secure occasion that offered. And such occasions he might reasonably expect would occur when each, in the absence of the other, would have the entire control of the receipts and expenditures of the establishment. In the progress of our partnership, for many years we were managing two theatres at the same time, he conducting one and I the other, yet for eighteen years neither, I presume, thought of suspecting the other of dishonorable or dishonest conduct; at least no such feeling was ever evinced on either side during the partnership.

Mr. Sol. Smith, Sr., must have possessed very little self-respect, and none of the proper feelings of a *man*, when he entered into partnership with one who had tricked and cheated him as he has charged me with having done, or else he has basely maligned and traduced me; to one or the other of these conditions his memory must unavoidably be attached.

I have made these statements very much against my inclinations, and entirely free from any desire to stigmatize the memory of my partner of many years, or in any way injure the feelings of his family. Neither have I done it to advocate my cause with those who may have known us as partners amicably pursuing our business together for a long term of years, or to justify my conduct on the occasion referred to with those who, as my name has not been *written* by my accuser, could not know to whom he refers; but I do make the statement for the sake of my children and grandchildren, the respect of whom is dearer to me than any other consideration,—none of them being in a condition at the time of the occurrence to have any personal knowledge of the facts in the case. For them, therefore, that they may protect my memory against any recurrence of these imputations, I here leave on record my solemn *protest* against the chicanery and injustice of Mr. Sol. Smith, Sr., in the charges covertly made by him in regard to my taking the Mobile theatre in 1834. For the present, I shall resume the more direct purpose of my narrative.

The first season under Ludlow & Smith's management began at Mobile, November 9, 1835, with the performance of the "Hunchback," Miss E. Riddle being announced as a "star," and appearing in the character of *Julia*; the *Sir Thomas Clifford* of the night being Mr. J. M. Field, her future husband; *Master Walter* (the Hunchback), Mr. Matthew C. Field, brother of the former; *Master Modus*, N. M. Ludlow; *Helen*, Miss Eliza Petrie. Second night, "Romeo and Juliet:" *Romeo*, J. M. Field; *Mercutio*, N. M. Ludlow; *Juliet*, Miss Riddle; *Nurse*, Mrs. Ludlow.

On arriving at Mobile, it was found we could not very well dispense with the services of Mrs. Ludlow; she had been performing in almost all the plays we had brought out, and it was desirable we should retain her services for another season at least. The third night, we performed the tragedy of "Venice Preserved:" *Pierre*, N. M. Ludlow; *Jaffier*, J. M. Field; *Belvidera*, Miss Riddle. Fourth night, "Wives as They Were:" *Miss Dorrillon*, Miss Riddle. Fifth night, "The Wife:" *Marianna*, Miss Riddle. Sixth night, the "School for Scandal:" *Lady Teazle*, Miss Riddle.

The first "star," really, of the season was Mr. Barton, an English actor from the Edinburgh Theatre. He had been in the United States about four years. He opened in "William Tell." Mr. Sol. Smith gives in his book an amusing account of Mr. Barton's adventures with the supernumeraries in the performance of this play; it is like many of Mr. Smith's stories, — funny, but lacking in point of fact, having but a slight foundation in reality. Mr. Barton played, besides, in this engagement, "Hamlet," "Lear," "Macbeth," "Othello," and "Werner," — the latter for his benefit.

Mr. Barton was a sensible and classic actor, and very particular in his stage business. He was unfortunate in diseased nerves, that made him fidgety and irascible. He was grievously afflicted at times with asthma, which finally caused his death. For some time he was stage-manager for James H. Caldwell at New Orleans. He performed for the last time in the United States at New York, in 1839; shortly after that he returned to England, and died there in 1848. Mr. Barton was a *gentleman* in every respect, and enthusiastically fond of his profession.

About this time a little excitement was got up among a few citizens of Mobile in order to get Miss Mary Vos engaged in our company. She was a resident of Mobile, and had been my leading lady in the theatre the preceding season, but had afterwards gone East to perform, and made no application for an engagement with us until we had commenced our season, and had engaged Miss Eliza Riddle for our leading lady. However, after some little trouble, the lady was engaged; Miss Riddle very generously agreeing to share the leading business with her, and the managers to add another large salary to their expenses per week, for twenty weeks, in order to gratify a few pertinacious friends of Miss Vos.

Mr. and Mrs. Tiernan were our next "stars." They opened in the comedy of the "Honeymoon," performing the *Duke* and *Juliana*. Second night, the lady performed *Julia*, in the "Hunchback." Third night, Mrs. Tiernan as *Rosalind*, in Shakespeare's "As You Like It." Mr. Tiernan enacting *Jaqes*. Fourth night, *Lady Teazle* ("School for Scandal") by Mrs. Tiernan, and *Joseph Surface* by Mr. Tiernan. Fifth night, the *Stranger* by Mr. Tiernan, *Mrs. Haller* by Mrs. Tiernan. Sixth night, *Marianna*, in the "Wife," by Mrs. Tiernan, and *St. Pierre* by Mr. Tiernan. Seventh night, and benefit of Mrs. Tiernan, the comedy of the "Belle's Stratagem:" *Letitia Hardy*, Mrs. Tiernan, and concluding with *Rachel Heywood*, in the "Rent Day:" *Martin Heywood*, Mr.

Tiernan. Eighth, and last night, for the benefit of Mr. Tiernan, "Richard III.:" *Richard*, Mr. Tiernan; *Queen*, Mrs. Tiernan. With the exceptions of the first and third nights and the two benefits, their performances were not as well attended as they should have been, for they were both chaste and good performers, and carried away with them the respect due to persons of their talents and character.

As I shall not have occasion to speak again of this lady and gentleman, I should like to say something more of them now. Mrs. Tiernan was born at Hull, England, in 1805; her maiden name Fanny Jarmin, under which name she often performed, having acquired some reputation as Miss Fannie Jarmin. She was a great favorite at one time at the Bath Theatre, England, when she was not even fifteen years of age. She was afterwards a leading lady at Dublin, Ireland, and made her first appearance at Drury Lane Theatre as *Juliet*, in "Romeo and Juliet," February 7, 1827, and her American *début* at Philadelphia, November 18, 1834; she made her first appearance in New York, December 17, 1834, as *Juliet*. She came South to New Orleans and Mobile, etc., in the fall of 1835; in all of these places she played engagements in conjunction with her husband. Independent of her talents as an actress, she possessed personal beauty enough to have made her a favorite; yet she failed in New York to command that attention that her merits were entitled to. She had, unfortunately, appeared in this country for the first time at Philadelphia; and that, to the New York people, was an offence to their importance as a metropolitan city which could not be passed over without showing resentment. Mrs. Tiernan took her farewell benefit in America at the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, December 11, 1836, as *Ion*, in Talfourd's tragedy of that name, and *Jennie Deans*, in "Heart of Midlothian;" and returned with her husband to England in December, 1836. Mrs. Tiernan's last appearance on the stage was at the Lyceum Theatre, London, in 1865, as *Alice*, in the "Master of Ravenswood." She died in London, December, 1873, surviving her husband twenty-six years.

Mr. Tiernan was a highly respectable actor, of more than ordinary talent. He was born in Dublin, in 1804; made his first appearance in America at the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, in November, 1834, as *Richard III.*, and at New York as *Romeo*, to his wife's *Juliet*, December, 1834; went South with her in the fall of 1835. He performed a short engagement with his wife at the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia; then they both sailed for England, late

in December, 1836. They appeared at Drury Lane Theatre together, where they both remained favorites for a considerable time. Mr. Tiernan died in London, October 17, 1847.

Miss Lydia Phillips played a very successful engagement with us this season. She was a lady of uncommon talent, refined in her deportment, and very beautiful in person. Her list of characters were those usually performed at that day by lady "stars," viz.: *Juliet*, *Mrs. Huller*, *Mrs. Beverly*, *Lady Teazle*, *Belvidera*, *Lady Macbeth*, in all of which she gave great satisfaction. As the best description that can be given of this lady, I subjoin an extract from Mr. Ireland's "New York Stage," a very reliable work of its kind.

"Miss Lydia Phillips made her first appearance in America as *Juliet*, in "Romeo and Juliet," with Mr. Wallack as *Mercutio* and Mr. Mason as *Romeo*, at the Park Theatre, New York, September 15, 1834. Miss Phillips had been for several years a favorite actress at Drury Lane, where her *Juliet* was considered a *chef-d'œuvre*, and where she had first appeared in 1829 as *Claudia*, in Miss Mitford's 'Rienzi.' She was tall and dignified in person, with an expressive countenance and very fine eyes, lady-like in her manners, graceful in her actions, a chaste and correct elocutionist, and though neither cold nor unimpassioned, always quiet and subdued in her style of acting. Her whole appearance indicated the truly refined and well-bred gentlewoman. Admired she certainly was during her American career, but following so quickly after the triumphal progress of Fanny Kemble, the usual reaction after intense excitement prevailed in the theatrical world, and she failed to create the favor that had accompanied her illustrious predecessor. Miss Phillips made the usual starring tour, and played her farewell engagement at Wallack's National Theatre, where she made her last appearance in New York on the first day of October, 1836, as *Lady Macbeth*. She married Mr. Salzburg, a gentleman of New Orleans, of supposed wealth; but we have understood that after a retirement of a few years, her profession was resumed for support in her native land.

It is astonishing with what blindness and reckless disregard of results young ladies on the stage, after having by their industry acquired handsome sums of money that with their talents would make them independent, pecuniarily, for life, will throw away these blessings and destroy their comfort, perhaps their happiness, by bestowing their hands and fortunes on heartless adventurers who have nothing to recommend them but, perhaps, goodly persons, and subtle tongues

to plead their suits. Why do they not "look before they leap?" Alas! poor silly woman! When will you learn wisdom?

Mr. George H. Hill appeared again this season before the Mobileans, and went through his Yankee performances; but not with as much success as on his visit of the previous season.

Then came Mdlle. Celeste (Mrs. Elliot now), whose engagement was great, — the most profitable one of the season. She became an immense favorite in Mobile, and when she appeared there in subsequent years, she was sure to fill the theatre to its utmost capacity.

Following came "Jim Crow" Rice, his first appearance there since he had "turned about, and wheeled about, and jumped Jim Crow;" and he did it here, as elsewhere, to well-paying houses. Many remembered him when he first came to Mobile, in 1828, as "property-man" and to play small business, and were much surprised to find him what he was in 1836.

After Mr. Rice came Miss Meadows, a sweet little girl about seven years of age, yet would pass very well for not more than six, beautiful as an imagined *houri*. She was under the care and instruction of Mrs. Frederick Brown. She performed many children's characters, and many that were not proper to be played by children. Her characters were *Little Pickle*, in the "Spoiled Child;" the "Four Mowbrays;" *Albert*, in "William Tell;" *Variella*, in the farce of the "Weathercock;" *Kathleen*, in the "Poor Soldier;" *Young Norval*, in the tragedy of "Douglas;" and *Catharine* in "Catharine and Petruchio," an adaptation from Shakespeare's "Taming of a Shrew." It fell to my lot to enact *Petruchio*; and when, in his singular courting scene, he says, "Kiss me, my Kate!" I was in doubt whether to lower my face to hers, or lift her up to mine; I felt myself in a ridiculous situation during the entire performance of the piece. But the funniest affair was her duet in the comic opera of the "Poor Soldier," with *Darby*, Mr. Sol. Smith, who was a man six feet and an inch in height, and at that time constructed pretty much after the style of a hop-pole. The duet begins with these words: —

Kathleen — "Out of my sight! or I'll box your ears!"

Darby — "I'll fit you soon for your gibes and jeers."

Kathleen — "I'll set my cap for a smart young man."

Darby — "Another I'll wed this day, if I can."

Mr. Smith sang as follows, for his first line, substituting,—

Darby — "You can't reach them for a number of years."

And for his second line,—

Darby — “You’ll not find one as *tall* as I am.”

At the same time placing himself alongside of and looking down upon her like a long-legged heron in search of small fish. The effect was ludicrous in the extreme, and the poor little girl could not control her risibles, but in a fit of laughter ran off the stage. Mr. Smith finished the verse for both, and then walked off the opposite side.

In all characters that Miss Meadows performed, that required singing or dancing, she was very clever. Her instructress, Mrs. Brown, was a very capable lady for the task she had undertaken, having been herself a very excellent artist in her younger years. She was originally Miss Sophie De Camp, a younger sister of Mrs. Charles Kemble, and aunt of Fanny Kemble, of histrionic fame. In the later years of her life Mrs. Brown sustained the line of old women in our theatres. She died in Mobile in the summer of 1841.

When Miss Meadows reached the age of sixteen her attraction began to weaken; her voice was not so good as it had been; then she was too large for children’s characters, and not quite womanly enough for leading ladies. I was told that she married early in life, and left the stage.

Mr. Charles Mason and sister performed a “star” engagement together for a few nights, but it was not profitable to them or the management.

Following them came the incomparable Clara Fisher that was, now Mrs. Maeder, one among the most attractive “stars” of her day that appeared in the United States. She had at this date been married a little over a year, but was fresh, buoyant, and inspiring as she was when I first saw her in 1831 in Natchez. She had never before played in Mobile, and the people were taken by surprise and made captives,—men women, and children; for her style was such—so natural, whether sprightly or pathetic—that all could appreciate it. She went through her usual round of characters, such as *Letitia Hardy*, in the “*Belle’s Stratagem* ;” *Albina Mandeville*, in the “*Will* ;” *Helen Worrett*, in “*Man and Wife* ;” *Maria*, in the “*Actress of All Work* ;” *Marian Ramsey*, in “*Turn Out* ;” *Little Pickle*, in the “*Spoiled Child*,” and others.

Having given a short sketch, as extended as the nature of this work could allow, of this lady in a former chapter of this book, I shall merely add here a few remarks taken from Mr. Ireland’s well-written and judicious criticisms, as contained in

his "New York Stage." Speaking of Clara Fisher, he says, page 538, vol. 1: "Her intellect was capable of grasping the most masterly creations of the most exalted minds, and in childhood her success was equally apparent in tragedy, opera, or farce; but on reaching womanhood, her face, her voice, and person were adapted principally to the lighter characters of opera and comedy, and in the latter line we consider her the most perfect and finished actress that has ever trod the American stage."

Miss Nelson played a few nights as a "star," but with the exception of her being a perfect presentation of womanly proportions, there was little to create an interest in her stage performances. She lacked intellectual expression. Her face was like some of those beautiful French dolls that I have at times seen. As *Doricourt* says:—

"Give me the woman in whose touching mien
A mind, a soul, a polished art is seen;
Whose motion speaks, whose poignant air can move;
Such are the darts to wound with endless love."

Miss Nelson first appeared in New Orleans as *Papillon*, second fairy in the opera of "Cinderella," and certainly looked a very beautiful "butterfly," but that was all. When I last saw this butterfly she weighed about two hundred pounds. She was first known off the stage as Mrs. Coppleston Hodges, and in 1847 as Mrs. John Brougham. She has long since retired from the stage; whether she be dead or living now, I am unable to say.

Mr. Henry J. Finn played a "star" engagement also, and was always a welcome favorite; but this, his last engagement in this city, was not so good for the treasury as those of former days.

Our company in Mobile this season consisted of the following persons, viz.: N. M. Ludlow, Sol. Smith, Joseph M. Field, M. C. Field, William Riddle, Charles Green, Radcliffe, Hubbard, Walton, Kelly, Johnson, Markham, Jackson, Brace, Manley, Lambey, Adams, Neale, Miss Eliza Riddle, Miss Mary Vos, Miss Eliza Petrie, Mrs. Ludlow, Mrs. Sol. Smith, Mrs. Hubbard, and Mrs. Graham.

The Mobile season closed the last week in May, and was of considerable profit to the management. The company proceeded at once to St. Louis.

CHAPTER XLIV.

St. Louis of 1836 — Mr. M. C. Field — Mrs. Lyons — J. M. Field — Miss Nelson — Mrs. A. Drake — Mrs. Pritchard — Mr. Hosack — Mr. and Mrs. Henry Lewis — Mrs. Duff — Cincinnati Theatre destroyed by Fire.

THE St. Louis summer season was opened under the joint management of Ludlow & Smith on the 9th of June, 1836. Mr. Smith was the officiating manager, *solus*, until early in August, myself and wife not arriving till then, we having tarried awhile in Mobile to adjust some matters in regard to our home, which we had determined to establish there. The first night's performance was the play of the "Hunchback," and the farce of "'Tis All a Farce."

The first piece was thus cast, as far as regards some of the leading characters: *Master Walter*, Mr. M. C. Field; *Sir Thomas Clifford*, Mr. Radcliffe; *Modus*, Mr. Jackson; *Lord Tinsel*, Mr. H. Walton; *Julia*, Miss E. Riddle; *Helen*, Mrs. Hubbard. The farce as follows: *Numpo*, Mr. Sol. Smith, Sr.; *Captain Belgardo*, Mr. M. C. Field; *Caroline*, Mrs. Hubbard. Second night, Miss Riddle as *Mary Copp*, in "Charles II.," and *Aurelia*, in the "Young Widow." Third night, Miss Riddle as *Mrs. Beverly*, in the "Gamester;" *Beverly* Mr. M. C. Field. Fourth night, the "Child of Nature;" *Amanthis*, Miss Riddle, with the farce of the "Dumb Belle." Fifth night, Knowles's play of the "Wife;" *Marianna*, Miss Riddle; *St. Pierre*, M. C. Field. Sixth night, the "Rent Day;" *Rachel Heywood*, Miss Riddle; *Martin Heywood*, M. C. Field; after which the "Wedding Day;" *Lady Contest*, Miss Riddle. Seventh night, and benefit of Miss Riddle, was performed three pieces, — "Husband at Sight;" *Catharine*, Miss Riddle; then came the farce of "John Jones;" *Guy Goodluck*, Mr. Sol. Smith, Sr.; concluding with the farce of the "Dumb Belle;" *Eliza*, Miss Riddle; *Vivian*, M. C. Field.

Miss Riddle expected to have left for Philadelphia at the conclusion of these seven nights, but Mr. J. M. Field not having arrived as was expected, who was to appear as the next "star," the young lady was induced to remain a few nights longer, and was therefore announced for five nights more.

Miss Riddle's first night of the re-engagement was a drama never performed before in St. Louis, and entitled the "Sledge Driver," in which she enacted *Catharine Saltekoff*. Second night, she performed *Amanthis*, in the "Child of Nature," and *Phoebe* in the "Miller's Maid." Third night, Mr. Charles Kemble's interesting play of the "Point of Honor:" *Durimel*, Mr. M. C. Field; *Bertha*, Miss Riddle; followed by the "Three and Deuce:" the *Three Singles*, Mr. Sol. Smith, Sr.! Prodigious!! On her fourth night, Miss Riddle enacted *Jane Shore*, in Rowe's tragedy of that name; when Mrs. Lyons, of the New Orleans theatrical company, made her first appearance in St. Louis, in the character of *Alicia*, in the same play. On Miss Riddle's fifth night was repeated the "Sledge Driver," as before; after which, the farce of the "Married Rake:" *Mrs. Trictrac*, Miss Riddle. The next night was announced as Miss Riddle's farewell benefit, when was performed a domestic drama entitled "Ellen Wareham:" *Ellen*, by Miss Riddle; the evening concluding with the farce of the "Loan of a Lover:" *Gertrude*, Miss Riddle.

Mr. J. M. Field not having arrived from New Orleans, the tragedy of "Douglas, the Noble Shepherd," was performed, when Mr. Lyons made his first appearance in St. Louis, in the character of *Young Norval*; *Lady Randolph*, Mrs. Lyons. The next night, June 25th, Mrs. Sol. Smith made her first appearance for six years in St. Louis, in the character of *Mrs. Haller*, in Kotzebue's play of the "Stranger." June 27th, Mr. J. M. Field made his first appearance this season, in Shakespeare's comedy of "Much Ado About Nothing," as *Benedict*; *Beatrice*, Mrs. Sol. Smith. The same night, Mr. Field enacted *Jeremy Diddler*, in the farce of "Raising the Wind." Next night, Massinger's play of "A New Way to Pay Old Debts:" *Sir Giles Overreach*, Mr. J. M. Field; *Justice Greedy*, Mr. Sol. Smith, Sr. In this character Mr. Smith was quite at home; he looked the character admirably. The following night Mr. J. M. Field played *Walter*, in the "Children in the Wood." After which a burlesque sketch, written by Mr. Field, entitled "Tourist in America:" *Tristram Doggrel*, Mr. J. M. Field.

Mr. Field's next performance was *Othello*, to his brother's *Iago*; *Desdemona*, Mrs. Sol. Smith; *Emilia*, Mrs. Lyons. The next night, July 1st, the entertainments of the evening began with the farce of "Turn Out:" *Marian Ramsey*, Mrs. Sol. Smith; *Gregory*, Mr. Sol. Smith; after which the farce of "My Aunt:" *Dick Dashall*, Mr. J. M. Field; to conclude, a piece in one act, called the "Mad Actor:" *Sylvester*

Daggerwood, Mr. J. M. Field. The following night, July 2d, was the benefit of Mr. J. M. Field, when he selected "King Lear," performing himself the character of *Lear*; *Edgar*, Mr. M. C. Field. But the feature of the night was the *Duke of Albany*, Mr. Sol. Smith, Sr. I think the people who witnessed that performance will never forget it! The entertainment concluded with the "Tourist," written by Mr. Field, cast as before. Mr. Field's night proving to be a stormy one, another was accorded him by the management. July 4th, the anniversary of American independence, was performed the "Soldier's Daughter;" after which "Tom Thumb," *Tom Thumb* being performed by Marcus Smith, then about eight years of age, who when grown up, and known as Mark Smith, was one among the best comedians of his day.

The night following, Mr. Field appeared and acted *Bertram*, in the tragedy of that name; and the ensuing one was announced as his second presenting of his name for a benefit, when was performed the comedy of "Town and Country," in which he appeared as *Reuben Glenroy*. The farce this night was the "Two Smiths, or the Modern Damon and Pythias:" *Damon Smith*, Mr. M. C. Field; *Pythias Smith*, Mr. J. M. Field.

Mr. Field's benefit this time was only a tolerably fair one; the season had become too warm, and the house close and uncomfortable.

I should have mentioned that Miss Riddle, having become a great favorite with the people of St. Louis, was re-engaged by the management for our theatres at St. Louis and Mobile for the ensuing fall and winter seasons. At the close of her present engagement she started with her brother William for Philadelphia, where she played at the Arch Street Theatre.

About this time my wife and children reached St. Louis, leaving me behind in Mobile, where I had some arrangements to make in regard to changing what had hitherto been the *pit*, at fifty cents admission, to what was afterwards known as the *parquet*, with elegant cushioned seats, like the pews in our fine churches, the price to which was made one dollar; and they became the favorite seats.

July 7th, Miss Nelson began a "star" engagement, commencing with *Victorine*, in the drama of that name. Next night *Peggy*, in the "Country Girl," and *Colin*, in "Nature and Philosophy;" next, *Edmund*, in the "Blind Boy," and *Marie*, in the "Citizen;" next, *Rosalind*, in "As You Like It;" next, *Ernestine*, in "Somnambulist" (the drama); then the

“Country Girl” again, and a little *ballet d’ action* entitled the “Sportsman Deceived;” then, for her benefit, “Victorine” again, and a scene from the “Tempest,” in which she appeared as *Ariel*, in which she sang several songs. This benefit was well attended, and she was reëngaged for a few nights, appearing July 17th in the musical drama of the “Forty Thieves,” as *Morgiana*. Next night, *Louisa*, in “Dead Shot,” and *Black-Eyed Susan*, in the melodrama of that name. July 18th, her farewell benefit, the “Weathercock,” in which she appeared as *Variella* concluding with the “Magpie and Maid,” in which she performed *Annette*. Altogether, Miss Nelson’s engagement was a pretty good one to her and the management.

After Miss Nelson’s engagement, they were three nights without any “star,” during which “Therese, the Orphan of Geneva,” by John Howard Payne, was performed to good houses. Then came Mrs. A. Drake, the “Mrs. Siddons of the West.” She commenced her engagement July 28th, in Knowles’s play of the “Hunchback,” in the character of *Julia*. Her second night was the “Wife,” in which she enacted *Marianna*. Third, *Margaret of Burgundy*, in the “Tour de Nesle.” Fourth night, *Isabella*, in the “Fatal Marriage.” Fifth night, *Bianca*, in “Fazio.” Sixth night, *Evadne*, in the tragedy of that name. Seventh night, *Willow Cheerly*, in the comedy of the “Soldier’s Daughter.” Eighth night, *Mrs. Haller*, in the “Stranger.” Ninth and last night, Mrs. Drake’s benefit, “Tour de Nesle,” as before, with other entertainments. Her benefit was a full house, and her engagement profitable all round. Mrs. Drake was a lady of no ordinary talent. In many characters performed by her I have never seen her surpassed, and but seldom equalled. Of the American actresses, I mean those born in America, I can remember but two entitled to any comparison with her. I refer to Miss Charlotte Cushman and Mrs. D. P. Bowers. Mrs. Drake, in her prime, I considered uncommonly clever in such characters as *Imogene* in the tragedy of “Bertram;” *Adelgitha*, in the tragedy of that name; *Isabella*, in the “Fatal Marriage;” *Mrs. Haller*, in the “Stranger;” *Florinda*, in the “Apostate;” *Evadne*, in the tragedy of that name, and many others I could speak of.

Miss Meadows arrived from the South, and commenced an engagement on August 8th, in the “Spoiled Child.” The next night, the “Four Mowbrays;” this was followed with *Albert*, in “William Tell,” and *Variella*, in the farce of the “Weathercock.” About this time I arrived from the South,

and appeared, for the first time this summer season, in the character of *Felix*, in the "Hunter of the Alps," Miss Meadows appearing the same night in the farce of the "Poor Soldier," as *Kathleen*; the *Patrick* of the night being Mrs. Sol. Smith; *Darby*, Mr. Sol. Smith. The following night, Miss Meadows performed *Young Norval*, in the tragedy of "Douglas, the Noble Shepherd," the farce being the "Weather-cock," again as before. The following night, "Catharine and Petruchio," when I had to go through a repetition of my affliction for the sake of my sweet little *Kate* — Meadows; after which she performed again the "Spoiled Child," in her peculiar *naïve* style. The latter performance was the farewell benefit of Miss Meadows, whose engagement was good, and her last night a crowded house.

This night was the last of what we termed our "spring season," when it was usual with us to make new engagements with our stock company for a year, embracing the fall season in St. Louis, winter season in Mobile, and spring season in St. Louis again. On this occasion the same members, I believe, were all re-engaged.

We opened our theatre again on Monday, August 29th, with Mrs. Pritchard as our "star" performer. Mrs. Pritchard commenced this engagement with a character that she played remarkably well, and in which she was highly popular, — *Alessandro Massaroni*, "The Italian Brigand." The next night, she performed *Helen McGregor*, in "Rob Roy." The following night, *Margaret of Burgundy*, in the "Tour De Nesle." Next, for the first time in St. Louis, a drama entitled the "Wife's Revenge," wherein she performed the character of *Agnes De Vere*; after which the character of *Mrs. Turtle*, in the farce of "Hunting a Turtle." The following night, *Letitia Hardy*, in the "Belle's Stratagem," and in the farce of "Young Reefer," *Julian*. Her husband (Mr. Hosack) appeared in this farce under the name of Pritchard, in the character of *Simon Penny*. Next night, a repetition of the "Brigand," and by request, the farce of the "Sprigs of Laurel;" the character of *Nipperkin*, a low-comedy character, by N. M. Ludlow. This was a character entirely out of my usual line of business, but for the performance of which I acquired a reputation that is remembered to this day by all old play-goers in the West. The following night, Mrs. Pritchard played *Adelgitha*, in the tragedy of that name. The night after was performed the melodramatic romance entitled the "Wreck Ashore," in which her husband (Mr. Hosack) appeared in the character of *Marmaduke Magoy*, and Mrs. P. as *Alice*. The next night,

Margaret of Burgundy, in the "Tour de Nesle." The same night she appeared in the farce of the "Dead Shot," as *Louisa Lovetrick*. The following night was the benefit, when she was guilty of one of those monstrous follies that a few ladies on the stage have at times fallen into, that of attempting to perform male characters. I mean characters intended to be performed only by men; and this attempt was the character of *Rolla*, in the play of "Pizarro," the one *most* unfit for a lady. The costume, the incidents, the stage business, the heroic character, are all at variance with feminine delicacy. Had it not been her benefit night, I should have endeavored to stop the acting of it. As it was, I only pointed to the absurdities that would attend it; and finding her persistently bent upon the abomination, I yielded to her folly, lest I should be reproached if by any accident her benefit should be poorly attended. Her whole performance of the character appeared to me a disgusting burlesque, which found its climax in the last scene, where *Rolla* rushes on the stage, after being wounded by a gunshot on the bridge, with *Cora's* child, which he places rapidly in her arms, and then falls dead at her feet. The white Peruvian shirt, which she very properly wore over flesh-colored "tights," had small weights to the lower edge to keep it down. This they did, so long as she was erect; but when she threw herself forward, in the act of falling, the weights had the opposite effect intended, and carried the shirt nearly over her head. Here was exhibited a *stern* reality that caused the men to laugh and the ladies to hide their blushes. The conclusion was any thing but pleasant.

Miss Eliza Petrie arrived about this time from the South. She had been one of our stock company at Mobile the past season, and being a favorite with the St. Louis people, she was announced as a "star" for a few nights. Her opening night was September 9th, when she appeared in two farces, viz., "Perfection:" *Kate O'Brien*, Miss Petrie; *Charles Paragon*, N. M. Ludlow; *Sir Lawrence Paragon*, Mr. Hubbard; then followed a farce without her, concluding with a "Husband at Sight:" *Catharine*, Miss Petrie. Her second night was the operatic play of "Rob Roy:" *Diana Vernon*, Miss Petrie; the farce of the night was "One Hundred and Two." Next night, the "Belle's Stratagem:" *Letitia Hardy*, Miss Petrie; *Doricourt*, N. M. Ludlow; the farce of the night was "Family Jars:" *Emily* (with a song), Miss Petrie. Next night, the operatic drama of "Guy Mannering:" *Julia Mannering*, Miss Petrie; *Domine Sampson*, Sol. Smith, Sr. The following night was performed "Black-Eyed Susan:" *Susan*, Miss

Petrie; concluding with the "Dumb Belle:" *Eliza* (with a song), Miss Petrie. Next night, "Love and Reason:" *Alice*, Miss Petrie; concluding with the "Loan of a Lover:" *Gertrude*, Miss Petrie. This was followed the ensuing night with the comedy of "Town and Country:" *Rosalie Somers*, Miss Petrie; *Reuben Glenroy*, Mr. M. C. Field; concluding with the "Highland Reel:" *Maggy McGilpin*, Miss Petrie; *Shelty*, N. M. Ludlow. This was another bit of low comedy for which I acquired some reputation. The above performance was for the benefit of Miss Petrie. This young lady was then announced as being engaged for the remainder of the season.

September 19th, Mrs. Sol. Smith's name was announced for a benefit, when was performed the "Hypocrite:" *Charlotte*, Mrs. Smith; *Mawworm*, Sol. Smith, Sr. The farce of the night was the "Highland Reel," as before. Mrs. Smith's benefit was well attended. The following night was for the benefit of Mr. Lambey, when was played the "Gambler's Fate:" *Julia*, Mrs. Sol. Smith; *Rose*, a little girl, Master Marcus Smith; the evening concluded with the "Mogul Tale:" *Johnny Atkins*, Mr. Lambey.

September 21st, benefit of Mr. M. C. Field, when was performed the "Rent Day:" *Martin Heywood*, M. C. Field. After which an original drama, written for the occasion, entitled "Sammy Pumper:" *Sammy*, Mr. M. C. Field; concluding with the farce of "No! or a Glorious Minority." His benefit was good. Next night, benefit of Mr. Jackson, the drama of the "Lady of the Lake:" *Fitz-James*, M. C. Field; *Douglas*, Jackson; *Ellen Douglas*, Miss Petrie; concluding with the "Irish Tutor:" *Terry O'Rourke*, Mr. Jackson. The following night was the benefit of Mr. Radcliffe, the first piece being the opera of "Rosina, or the Reapers:" *Rosina*, Miss Petrie; *Irishman*, Mr. Radcliffe. This was followed by the trial scene of the "Merchant of Venice:" *Shylock*, Mr. Radcliffe (a failure); concluding with the "Illustrious Stranger:" *Bowbell*, Mr. Sol. Smith, Sr. The night following, September 24th, was for the benefit of N. M. Ludlow, on which occasion Mrs. Ludlow, who had been very ill for some time, made her first appearance for the season. The entertainment commenced with the comedy of the "Heir at Law:" *Doctor Pangloss*, N. M. Ludlow; *Zekiel Homespun*, Sol. Smith, Sr.; *Lord Duberly*, C. Green; *Dick Dowlas*, M. C. Field; *Lady Duberly*, Mrs. Ludlow; *Cecily Homespun*, Mrs. Sol. Smith; *Caroline Dormer*, Mrs. Hubbard. The evening concluded with a melodrama called "Gilderoy, or the Bonny Boy:" *Gilderoy*, M. C. Field; *Jessie*, Miss

Petrie. The benefit of Mrs. Hubbard took place on the Monday following, when was performed the "Point of Honor:" *Durimel*, Mr. M. C. Field; *Mrs. Melfort*, Mrs. Hubbard; the farce was the "Honest Thieves:" *Mrs. Day*, Mrs. Hubbard. The following evening Mr. Green took a benefit, when was performed the melodrama of the "Broken Sword:" *Mrytillo* (a dumb orphan), Mrs. Sol. Smith; *Colonel Rigolia*, Mr. M. C. Field; *Captain Xavier*, Mr. Green; *Rosara*, Miss Petrie. The afterpiece was the "Unfinished Gentleman:" *Lord Totterly*, Mr. Green. The following evening, September 28th, was for the benefit of Mrs. Ludlow, and positively her *last appearance on the stage*. The performance was Goldsmith's comedy of "She Stoops to Conquer:" *Young Marlow*, N. M. Ludlow; *Hastings*, M. C. Field; *Hardcastle*, Green; *Tony Lumpkin*, Radcliffe; *Mrs. Hardcastle*, Mrs. Ludlow; *Miss Hardcastle*, Mrs. Sol. Smith; *Miss Neville*, Miss Petrie.

This was the last time my wife appeared upon the stage, although she lived as my wife twenty-six years after, and took care of my home and her children's welfare, dying at my house in the suburbs of Mobile, October 1, 1862, and was buried there in Magnolia Cemetery.

On the 29th of September, Mr. Lyons took a benefit, when was performed "Damon and Pythias:" *Damon*, Mr. Lyons; *Pythias*, M. C. Field; *Calanthe*, Miss Petrie. This was a very lame affair. Mr. Lyons was not at all adequate to the character, and Miss Petrie was entirely out of her element, her best effort being in singing characters and comedy. The farce for the night was the "Lady and the Devil:" *Wildlove*, N. M. Ludlow; *Jeremy*, Sol. Smith, Sr.; *Zephyrina*, Mrs. Sol. Smith.

Mr. Whitaker, our box-door keeper, wished to try his luck in the way of a benefit; he was granted Friday evening, September 30th, when the following notice was, at his request, put at the head of the play-bills: "'Go it! Ye cripples!'" Mr. Whitaker most respectfully announces to the public in general, and the cripples in particular, that, through the kindness of the managers, he is enabled to make an appeal to them for a benefit. Having lost his *left arm* in the service of his country during the war, he is obliged to perform 'double duty' with the one that is *left* (which is the *right*) to earn a livelihood. He flatters himself that on this occasion the *right hand* of fellowship will be extended to him by his fellow-citizens, and that for the many *bills* he has *handed* them during the season, they will *hand-somely* repay him by *hand-ing* him

tickets to-night." The first piece of the night was "Love and Reason." This was followed by some comic songs, and the evening concluding with the farce of the "Dumb Belle."

The benefit did not yield poor Whitaker much profit. What do the public care for the "poor soldier" after the smoke of his musket has floated away? Nothing! pah! "Whit," as the young men about the theatre used to call him, would have got more money if he had taken the young men's advice, — gone around with his tickets among his acquaintances; but he would not do it. He said he had "never yet been a beggar, and he never would be." He was one of those soldiers that Shakespeare had in his mind when he wrote these lines: —

"The soldier's virtue rather makes choice of loss,
Than gain which darkens him."

Saturday, October 1st, was for the benefit of Sol. Smith, Sr., commencing with a piece, in one act, called "No! or the Glorious Minority:" *Commodore Hurricane*, Sol. Smith, Sr. Between play and farce, songs, after which the "Three and Deuce;" the whole concluding with "Buried Alive:" *Ben Bowbell*, Sol. Smith, Sr. The benefits being concluded, Mrs. Henry Lewis was engaged for a few nights as a "star." She commenced Monday, October 3d, in the tragedy of "Fazio, or the Italian Wife," she performing *Bianca*, the Italian wife; *Fazio*, M. C. Field; after which she danced *La Sylphide*, the evening concluding with the "Lottery Ticket."

Then came a series of monstrosities, such as have ever been objects of disgust to me, — male characters performed by a female. Here is a list enacted by Mrs. Lewis in this engagement, that was enough to make the departed author of some of them, as it were, "from his grave rise up, and walk like sprite, to countenance this horror." Beginning with *Richard III.*, *William Tell*, *Virginius*, *Othello*, *Don Juan* (pantomime), *Wild Boy of Bohemia*, and others. The engagement was not satisfactory to the public, or profitable to managers or actress. Had this lady confined her acting to her legitimate sphere, she would have been much better liked; for, although modelled after the London minor theatre pattern, yet there was a force and spirit in it that in some characters would have passed with many people as good acting.

Her husband, Mr. Henry Lewis, was a low comedian of the same school, and in smart and bustling servants generally was not a bad actor.

Now comes a lady the very opposite of Mrs. Lewis in her style of acting, — Mrs. Duff; refined, quiet, yet powerful;

not boisterous, yet forcible; graceful in all her motions, and dignified, without stiffness. Mrs. Duff, now Mrs. Sevier, recently married, was engaged for four nights, — she could stop no longer, — and commenced October 13th with the tragedy of “*Adelgitha*,” in which she performed the title rôle. Her second appearance, 14th, was in the drama of “*The Maid and the Magpie*,” in which she performed *Annette*. The following night, the 15th, she performed the character of *Isabella*, in the tragedy of that title. The fourth night, Monday, October 17th, was for her benefit, on which occasion she performed *Mrs. Haller*, in the “*Stranger*.” This lady’s acting was very justly and greatly admired. She was at that time undoubtedly the best tragic actress in the United States.

As I shall have no opportunity to speak of Mrs. Duff again, and as she has by her acting interested the people of the United States quite as much as any one that ever appeared on the stage in this country, I trust I shall be pardoned for giving a more extended notice of her dramatic efforts.

Mrs. Mary Ann Duff was born in London, England, in the year 1794. Her maiden name was Dyke, and she and her sister Elizabeth were admired dancers on the Dublin stage in 1809. It is said that Thomas Moore, the Irish poet, fell deeply in love with Miss Mary Ann Dyke, and would have married her, but finding she preferred John E. Duff, then a young and handsome actor on the Dublin stage, gave up all hopes of obtaining her hand; however, some years after, he courted and married her sister Elizabeth, who was, I believe, Mr. Moore’s second wife. Mr. Duff was married to Miss M. Ann Dyke early in 1810, and very shortly after started with her for America. In the fall of that year, Mr. Duff made his first appearance in the United States at Boston, on the stage of the old Federal Street Theatre, in the character of *Gossamer*, in Frederick Reynolds’s comedy of “*Laugh when You Can*,” and was well received. Shortly after, Mrs. Duff appeared in *Juliet*, to her husband’s *Romeo*. Mr. Duff was a decided success; his wife was courteously but coldly received. There was said to be a tameness and a lack of practical stage knowledge that prevented any marked approbation of the beautiful but inexperienced actress. They remained in Boston two years, and then went to Philadelphia, where they both became favorites, Mr. Duff especially so.

In 1814–15 I first saw Mr. and Mrs. Duff, in the Albany Theatre, then under the management of old John Bernard. The first performance that I witnessed of theirs was *Macbeth* and *Lady Macbeth*. The acting of Mr. Duff made a deep

impression on my youthful mind, leaving with me the opinion that he was a highly gifted actor; but the lady seemed to me, although showing some talent, to lack the power of presenting with truthfulness a character requiring so much force and strong expression as *Lady Macbeth*. In 1822, Mr. and Mrs. Duff were in Boston again, and during that season Mrs. Duff grew into great favor with the Bostonians. In 1823, September 5th, Mrs. Duff first appeared in the city of New York, at the Park Theatre, as *Hermione*, in a tragedy translated from the French of Racine by Ambrose Phillips, and entitled the "Distressed Mother," on which occasion Lucius Junius Booth was the *Orestes* of the night, and the lady at once convinced the New York people that she was unquestionably a woman of great histrionic abilities. On the 24th of the same month, for her benefit, she performed *Florinda*, in the "Apostate," Mr. Duff, appearing for the first time in ten years in that city, enacting *Malec*, in the above tragedy, and performing the *Three Singles* as an afterpiece. In neither Boston nor Philadelphia, after performing in both cities for a number of years, had Mrs. Duff been supposed to possess such wonderful tragic powers as she began now to develop. In 1823, she played an engagement conjointly with her husband in Philadelphia, for a few nights, concluding with her benefit, which was an immensely crowded house, the receipts being nearly treble that of her husband's, who had hitherto been considered the greater feature of the two. Mrs. Duff's great personal beauty, added to her talent and her amiable qualities as a lady, endeared her to all hearts. In Philadelphia, Mrs. and Mr. Duff were frequently spoken of as the "handsome couple."

In 1828, Mrs. Duff and husband returned on a visit to England, when the lady made her first appearance in her native land as an *actress*, at the Brighton Theatre, playing a successful engagement; then went to London, and appeared at Drury Lane Theatre, in the character of *Isabella*, in the "Fatal Marriage;" but her anxiety and apprehensions so unnerved her that she quite failed to do justice to her real abilities, and, disgusted with her own lack of fortitude and disheartened with cold praise, she came back to her adopted home, and appearing in New York, played a brilliant engagement of many nights. About the year 1829, Mr. Duff's abilities began to fail him, and Mrs. Duff saw a necessity arising that would compel her to put forth her best exertions for the support of her husband and herself and a large family of children. Mr. Duff had for some time been the victim of

gout and rheumatism, which had almost paralyzed his capabilities for business, and in April, 1831, he died at Philadelphia, in the prime of life, being aged only about forty-one years. Mr. and Mrs. Duff were for many years members of the Chestnut Street theatrical company, under the management of the highly respectable firm of Wood & Warren, Philadelphia. Mr. William B. Wood (of that firm), in a book published by him in 1855, in speaking of Mr. Duff, says: "He was a long and esteemed member of our company, greatly respected for his gentle and unassuming manners and excellent conduct in his domestic relations." Mr. Ireland, in his book, the "New York Stage," a most reliable work, says, under date of September 8, 1835, "Mrs. Duff made her first appearance in two years, as *Mrs. Haller*. She was enthusiastically received, and her great excellence appeared to be in no wise diminished."

According to the same authority, she appeared in the same theatre again on November 2d, immediately following; performing *Angela*, in the tragedy of the "Castle Spectre;" *Calanthe*, in "Damon and Pythias;" *Imogene*, in the tragedy of "Bertram;" *Belvidera*, in "Venice Preserved;" *Desdemona*, in "Othello;" *Portia*, in the "Merchant of Venice;" and *Lucy Fairlove*, in the melodrama of "Ambrose Gwinnett."

In the spring of 1836, Mrs. Duff married Mr. Joel G. Sevier, a lawyer, born in one of our Eastern States; a man of good general intelligence, not ill-looking, about forty years of age, and with the usual Yankee shrewdness. In the fall of 1836, Mr. and Mrs. Sevier arrived in St. Louis, and the lady was engaged by Ludlow & Smith, managers of the only theatre at that date in the city. The lady appeared under the well-known theatrical name of Duff, on October 13th, being on her way to New Orleans, where Mr. Sevier proposed to locate himself and pursue his profession of the law.

I think it was from about 1840 to 1845 that I occasionally saw Mrs. Sevier (Duff) in New Orleans; but I am not aware of her having attended any of the theatres, or of her associating with persons attached to them. It was said at the time, that she had become a member of some church that forbade their communicants attending theatres.

How far Mr. Sevier was successful in the exercise of his profession I am unable to say. I remember hearing of only one case in which Mr. Sevier was engaged; in this he was attorney for the plaintiff. It was a somewhat celebrated case, instituted by a vendor of patent medicines, calling himself Dr. Stillman, against some person for invading his patent by

putting forth spurious articles, which were called "Stillman's Extract of Sarsaparilla" and also "Stillman's Patent Pills." Those of my readers who have been familiar with the law courts of New Orleans—say 1840 to 1845—will probably remember the peculiar tones of voice of Counsellor Sevier when uttering and re-uttering, in almost every sentence, "Stillman's celebrated Sarsaparilla *and* Pills;"—in all instances emphasizing the *and*, and speaking in that peculiar nasal twang traditionally attributed to persons born "near where the sun rises." However, if I remember rightly, he gained the suit for his client.

At what date Mr. and Mrs. Sevier removed from New Orleans I am unable to say. For many years—even as late as June, 1874—the existence or death of Mrs. Duff (Sevier) was a mooted question, even among her nearest and dearest friends. It was then discovered, and published in a New York newspaper, that she had died of hemorrhage of the lungs in that city, August 31, 1857, aged sixty-three years, and had been an earnest and consistent member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and had lived and died at the house of her daughter, who belonged to the same religious society.

It seems that both mother and daughter had used their best endeavors to conceal the fact that Mrs. Sevier had ever been an actress. So much for sectarian prejudice. But, to return to my narrative. On the day of the night that Mrs. Duff commenced her engagement with us at St. Louis, I started for Mobile, for the purpose of superintending the finishing of certain improvements of the interior of the theatre there, commenced at the close of our previous season.

After Mrs. Duff, came Miss Riddle again, who had just returned from the East, and who performed with us five nights as a "star."

These performances terminated our summer season in St. Louis of 1836. On the 22d of October of this year the Cincinnati Theatre, erected by J. H. Caldwell, and opened July 4, 1832, was destroyed by fire.

CHAPTER XLV.

Subscription for a New Theatre in St. Louis — Mobile Season of 1836 — Stars — Mrs. Drake — Mrs. Pritchard — Mr. J. S. Balls — Mr. J. W. Wallack, Sr. — Mr. and Mrs. Keely — Joseph Burke' — H. J. Finn — Mrs. Lewis — Grand Military Ball — Biography of Mr. and Mrs. Keely — Biography of H. J. Finn — Arrival in St. Louis, April, 1837 — Deep Snow.

IN THE summer of 1835, prior to my taking Mr. Sol. Smith as a partner, — at the suggestion of a number of gentlemen, citizens of St. Louis and friends of the Drama, — I started a subscription for stock to build a regular theatre, that should be comfortable, and in consonance with the taste of that thriving city. The old "salt-house" building, fitted up by James H. Caldwell in 1827, they had become dissatisfied with; and not without reason, as it was a miserable apology for a theatre — uncomfortable in every respect. With the aid of two very good friends of mine, Col. Meriwether Lewis Clarke and Col. Charles Keemle, I very soon succeeded in getting \$30,000 subscribed, the sum to which I proposed to limit the cost of the theatre and ground; for, as I was to pay ten per cent per annum on the entire outlay for building and ground, and to put in the scenery at my own expense, I thought that sum was as much as the probable success of the venture would justify. At this point the matter rested for a time, and the work was to commence at once, or at least as soon as a suitable lot could be purchased for the purpose. To this end, a meeting of the stockholders was called and a building committee appointed, which consisted of Col. Joseph C. Lavielle, Col. M. L. Clarke, and the writer, N. M. Ludlow. A lot was selected by them at the south-east junction of Third and Olive streets, where the post-office now stands.

Mr. Sol. Smith, in his book (page 121), says there was much diversity of opinion about the location of this theatre; that "several members of the building committee thought that Second Street was 'as far out as they ought to go for a site, and rather inclined to Main Street, or Market Street between Main and Second Streets, as the most desirable location.' " This is one among many instances wherein Mr. Smith has indulged his disposition for romance at the expense

of facts. As I was one of the building committee, and present at all its meetings, and Mr. Smith was not, being in the Eastern States while the location was talked of and settled, I take it upon myself to say that no such points were spoken of among the committee. The lot selected was one suggested by Mr. Clarke, and not objected to by either of the other two members; the only point of debate with them was whether the front on Third Street was sufficiently large. This objection was afterwards removed, by finding we could purchase of Col. John O'Fallon twenty additional feet adjoining the south side of the lot, at the same rate we had bargained to pay for the sixty feet front from the corner of Olive Street, giving us thus a lot of eighty feet by one hundred and fifty, running back to an alley. Having obtained this additional piece of ground, Col. M. L. Clarke, a gentleman of classical taste in literature and art, and possessed of exalted sentiments in regard to the Drama, proposed that we should solicit those who had subscribed towards the stock already obtained, to *double* their subscriptions. This was an important matter for the consideration of the proposed lessees. About this time Mr. Sol. Smith, Sr., having returned from the East, and I having settled with him the terms of a partnership for a number of years, discussed with him this matter of an increase in the cost of the new theatre, which would compel us to pay, in the way of rent, at least *double* the amount that had been originally contemplated. Feeling a strong desire to give the St. Louis public a building that they might feel proud of, we consented to the increased cost of the contemplated theatre, against convictions in our own minds that we would be subjecting ourselves to a rental that the population of the city would hardly justify. How far those convictions were correct will be shown in the subsequent pages. We found very little trouble in getting the subscribers generally to consent to double their subscriptions: indeed, in a short time we discovered that there had been subscribed over sixty-five thousand dollars, in names of men thought to be good for their amounts. The foundation of the building, in stone, was laid in the fall of 1836, and built up to the average height of about ten or twelve feet before the cold weather stopped the work. During the winter a considerable amount of inside work was got ready in the carpenter department, under the direction of Mr. Alex. Crawl, my head carpenter, assisted by Mr. John B. Gibson, Mr. John Varden, and others. The scenery also was put in a state of forwardness under John R. Smith, scenic artist.

Our season in Mobile commenced November 9, 1836. As I have lost my file of play-bills for this season, I can only mention certain pieces that were performed on particular occasions.

Our company consisted this season of the following stock performers: N. M. Ludlow, Sol. Smith, Sr., Joseph M. Field, M. C. Field, Thomas Placide, Vincent De Camp, Messrs. Clarke, Anderson, Hubbard, Anderton, Riley, Barker, Kelly, Jackson, Thomas Pearson, James Thorpe, Newton, Sergeant, Jones, West, and Chambers; Miss E. Riddle, Miss Mary Vos, Miss Eliza Petrie, Miss Emily Clarke, Mrs. Sol. Smith, Sr., Mrs. Hubbard, Mrs. Salzman, Mrs. Kutz, and Miss Voght. The company was considered a very good one, and gave satisfaction.

The opening play of the season was, if I remember rightly, Morton's comedy of "Speed the Plough," with the following cast of characters: *Sir Abel Handy*, Mr. De Camp; *Bob Handy*, N. M. Ludlow; *Sir Philip Blandford*, W. Anderson; *Henry*, J. M. Field; *Farmer Ashfield*, T. Placide; *Morrington*, Clarke; *Gerald*, Newton; *Evergreen*, Hubbard; *Lady Handy*, Mrs. Hubbard; *Miss Blandford*, Miss Vos; *Susan Ashfield*, Miss Riddle; *Dame Ashfield*, Mrs. Salzman. I believe I never saw this comedy so well enacted before or since, in any of our Western theatres. The early nights of this season were, for a month at least, filled by the performances of our stock company, by whom were acted a round of good comedies, tragedies, and dramas, to excellent houses and general satisfaction.

Our first "star" this season was Mrs. A. Drake, who went through with her usual round of characters, to remunerative business. The next "star," I believe, was Mr. J. S. Balls, an Englishman, and an actor of a bustling, lively turn, after the style of the minor theatres, London. Mr. Ireland, in his "New York Stage," says of him that he made his first appearance in America at the Park Theatre, October 15, 1835, in *Vapid*, in the "Dramatist," and the *Singles*, in the "Three and Deuce." He says, further: "He will be remembered as a man of mercurial temperament, giving great satisfaction in saucy footmen, eccentric fops, and shuffling spend-thrifts."

Mr. Balls was born in England, in 1799, played in the provincial theatres until 1829, when he visited London, and appeared in *Jeremy Diddler*, in the farce of "Raising the Wind," with some success. His last appearance in New York was in 1840; he then returned to his native country, and died in Dublin, Ireland, in 1844. Mrs. Pritchard "starred" it for a

few nights again, in her usual round of characters, leaving out most of her male attempts.

Mr. James W. Wallack, Sr., played an engagement this season, to good business. The Mobileans were delighted, most especially with his *Rolla, Massaroni* (the "Brigand"), *Benedick*, in "Much Ado About Nothing;" *Dashall*, in "My Aunt," and others that I cannot now remember. He has never been equalled in this country in the above characters by anybody that I have seen.

Mr. and Mrs. Keely, English performers, played an engagement with us. Also young Joseph Burke, Mr. H. J. Finn, Mrs. Lewis, and others of less note. On Washington's Birthday night, February 22d, the theatre was rented by us to give a grand military ball in honor of the day.

We had the parquet covered with a floor from the front of the boxes to the stage, which, thus connected, presented a grand *salon de bal*, the seats in the boxes furnishing sitting accommodations, and the large drinking-saloon of the second tier a commodious supper-room. We were paid \$2,000 for the night. It was a splendid display of beauty, taste, and fashion, that did credit to the city.

Our season this year yielded us a handsome profit, and, I believe, the best of the few profitable seasons we had in Mobile in the course of many years of our management in that city.

About the 1st of April of this year (1837), leaving my company performing in Mobile under the management of my partner, I started for St. Louis to assist in pushing forward to completion the new theatre, then rendered more urgent from the fact that the "old salt-house" theatre had been burned down in the month of February previous, and with it such scenery as we had left therein the previous fall. Taking a boat at New Orleans, I arrived at St. Louis on the 10th of April, 1837, and stepped ashore in snow nearly up to my knees; but of this more hereafter.

Before taking leave of the Mobile season, I would like to say something more of Mr. and Mrs. Keely, whom I have ever considered as unequalled, in their several lines of business, on this side of the Atlantic Ocean.

Mr. Robert Keely was a small man, with a large head; and his loving wife used to say his "bust was like that of the great Roman, Julius Caesar," as handed down to us; and I think she was not far from being correct in this opinion. I do not know that Robert Keely ever crossed the *Rubicon*, but he crossed the ocean to America. "He came, he saw, he con-

quered" — the Yankees ! And he and his exquisite little wife did it in a quiet way ; so quiet and pleasant that the people hardly knew it till they found themselves captivated. Our modern Cæsar had his Calphurnia with him, and combinedly they overcame those on whom they exercised their prowess, till not a man, woman, or child could stand up against their powerful onslaught of fun ! *Veni, vidi, vici!*

Mr. Keely was below the medium height in stature, measuring but little over five feet ; but he had head and brains enough for a man seven feet in height. He was one of a few great small men whom I have met with in my professional career ; as great an artist, in my humble opinion, in his peculiar line of characters, as that other great small man Lucius Junius Booth, Sr., was in his rôle of high tragedy. I have not seen a person or persons whom I could, in accordance with my judgment, place on the same grade of excellence with those two great artists in their several choice characters.

Mr. Robert Keely was born in England, in the year 1793. In compliance with the wishes of his friends, he began life by endeavoring to learn the printing business, at which he worked some time ; but finally followed his own inclinations, which led him to the stage of the Richmond Theatre (England), in 1813. He soon became popular as a provincial actor, and after a few years' apprenticeship in that way, made his appearance in London at the Olympic Theatre, as *Leporello*, in the original production of the burletta of "Giovanni in London." In 1821 he was at the Adelphi Theatre, where he was the original representative of *Jemmy Green*, in "Tom and Jerry," and made the character one of the prominent parts of the piece.

Mr. and Mrs. Keely made their first appearance in America at the Park Theatre, New York, September 19, 1836, in the "Loan of a Lover" and "My Master's Rival," the former in *Peter Spyke* and *Paul Shack*, the latter as *Gertrude* and *Tibby Postlewaite*. After playing two engagements at the Park Theatre, they performed in other theatres of the United States, coming South and West early in 1837, and performing in New Orleans, Mobile, and, if I am not mistaken, at St. Louis. In the summer of 1837 they returned to England, and have never visited America since.

Mr. and Mrs. Keely were undoubtedly two excellent artists, of pure and unadulterated taste and genuine genius ; but the dramatic pieces that they were in the habit of appearing in, although pleasing, and as far as they were responsible exquisitely well performed, were not of a magnitude to make an im-

posing impression on the public ; especially that portion of it not possessing nice discrimination or true critical judgment ; and, unfortunately, of such are the masses in general. Every person that I have met and conversed with, for the last thirty years, in regard to the acting of Mr. and Mrs. Keely, has seemed to enter warmly into my admiration of these two excellent and amiable artists.

Mrs. Keely's maiden name was Goward. She was born in England, in 1806, and consequently was about thirty years of age when I saw her perform in Mobile. Her face, although not remarkable for beauty, was uncommonly expressive, and was used by her with most powerful effect in producing upon the faces of her auditors either smiles or tears. In her singing, in addition to a good voice, there was a vast amount of expression ; and in her acting, at times, a *naïveté* that was irresistibly bewitching ; at other times, a pathos that carried the sentiment directly to the heart. I have heard the theatre-going people of New Orleans and Mobile often express their regrets that Mr. and Mrs. Keely did not see it their interest to visit them again. A second trip to the United States would, I am certain, have been more profitable to them. It required some little time for the masses to become used to their quiet style before they could appreciate its excellence.

For many years these remarkable artists enjoyed a pleasant career of prosperity in their own country. Mrs. Keely, I believe, is still living in England ; but Mr. Keely, I have heard, died in 1874.

During the Mobile season, we had been getting the opera of "Cinderella" into a state of readiness for production before the public, by rehearsing at convenient times the music, painting scenery, and constructing other appurtenances of the opera calculated to make it efficient and attractive.

Among other agencies employed to give affect to the opera, we engaged a Mr. Larkin,—familiarily known as "Paddy Larkin,"—to perform the character of the *Prince*. Mr. Larkin was a man of considerable musical capacity as a tenor singer, but unfortunately possessed of a very exalted opinion of his own abilities, which, in spite of that proverbial *modesty* attendant on Irishmen, would at times make itself apparent, to the discomfort of those who might be performing in the same piece with him. At a date early in April, I think it was,—for I was not present at the time, being in St. Louis attending to the progress of the new theatre there,—this opera was produced by our own company, with the following cast of the principal characters : *Prince*, Mr. Larkin ; *Baron Pom-*

polino, Mr. De Camp ; *Dandini*, Mr. J. M. Field ; *Alidaro*, Mr. Sol. Smith, Sr. ; *Pedro*, Mr. Thomas Placide ; *Cinderella*, Miss E. Petrie ; *Clarinda*, Mrs. Sol. Smith ; *Thisbe*, Miss E. Clarke ; *Fairy Queen*, Miss Voght.

Not being present at its production, I give here what my partner says of it in his book : " While I am free to admit that first-rate musical talent was not there to *insure* success, I do aver that every note of the opera was sung and played, and the performance was highly creditable to all concerned in it."

Before taking leave of this season, I wish to say something in regard to a gentleman who performed for the last time with *us*, and who shortly after disappeared from the great stage of this world. I have reference to Mr. Henry J. Finn, a gentleman and a scholar, a credit to his profession, and an honor to humanity, whose lamentable death was regretted by all who knew him, and profoundly mourned by his family and a large circle of friends. Mr. Finn was an actor, an author, and a painter. His father, at one time, was an officer in the British navy, but for some few years a resident of the city of New York, while this son was a small boy. Mr. Finn was born at Cape Breton, N. S., about the year 1790. It was intended by his father that he should be bred to the practice of the law, and to this end he was placed with a distinguished legal gentleman of New York City. During that time he obtained an *entrée* behind the scenes of the Park Theatre, where he soon became affected with the " stage mania." He made his first appearance on the American stage at the above theatre, January, 1818, as *Shylock*, in the " Merchant of Venice ;" and during the same engagement performed *Sir Edward Mortimer*, in Colman's tragedy of the " Iron Chest ;" *Lord Ogleby*, in the comedy of the " Clandestine Marriage," and *Belcour*, in the " West Indian." He was shipwrecked at sea on a voyage to England with his mother, to visit his father's relations ; but they were rescued from a watery grave by a passing vessel.

He was some time in England, performing on the stage and occasionally painting scenery, for he was a clever artist in the latter way, and no mean miniature-painter. At one time he taught school for a living, finally found his way to London, and got a situation at the Haymarket Theatre, and from that time began to attract some notice as an actor. A few years after, he returned to America, and made his appearance as above stated. He was at one time associate editor of the *Savannah Georgian*. He married the daughter of Mr. Powell, who was at one time manager of the Boston Theatre. Mr. Finn

was one of the victims at the burning of the steamer *Lexington*, in Long Island Sound, January, 1840, being on his return home to Newport, Rhode Island, from a trip South.

He was an excellent actor in eccentric comedy (he had abandoned tragedy years before his death), his choice characters being *Beau Shatterly*, *Bob Logic*, *Paul Shack*, *Philip Garbois*, *Monsieur Jacques*, *Billy Black*, and like characters.

As I have previously said, I reached St. Louis on the 10th of April. The prospect for the early opening of the new theatre looked very unpromising; every object out of doors was covered with snow. Making my way to the building, as the first object of interest to me, I entered through one of the basement openings, waded to the centre of the great area, looked up at the four walls, without any roof on them, and felt a sensation as though my heart was sliding down into my boots. All looked cold and discouraging, and I began to revolve in my mind at what time in the summer or fall we should be able to open the house to the public. While I stood thus in gloomy mood, my head-carpenter, Mr. Crowl, arrived at the building, and a few minutes' conversation with him changed the condition of my feelings greatly. He informed me that the heavy timbers for the roof were all ready to be put in their places; that the flooring joists for the lobbies and boxes and parquet were all in a condition to be put in; the stage and lobby flooring were ready to be laid; in short, that the timbers for the inside heavy work were ready to be adjusted in their proper places.

I should have mentioned before this, that during the previous fall, about the time I was preparing to leave St. Louis for the South, Mr. Crowl informed me that he was afraid the front wall of the theatre would have to be taken down, and it was at that time as high almost as intended to be ultimately. He said that the openings in that wall were so many and so large that he feared the spaces between would not be sufficiently strong to sustain the weight that would be upon them when the roof should be put on; and advised that there be some alteration of the front portion of the building. This alteration, after some consultation with the other members of the building committee and a competent architect, was decided should be made. Some of the openings of the inner wall of the vestibule were to be closed, and then the two walls, the outer and inner, were to be put up anew, and as they were rebuilt, filled in with what bricklayers term *grouting*, the best quality of lime; that is, lime reduced to a fluid condition, and poured in between the bricks forming the wall. This was

found to be quite sufficient ; for, after standing for more than ten years without a single crack appearing, these two walls were pulled down to make way for the present building, the custom-house and post-office, and the bricks of these walls came out in solid blocks, like large slabs of stone. On visiting the workshop or paint-room of our scenic artist, Mr. J. R. Smith, I found he had got ready eight pair of " flats " (centre-scenes), and with their appropriate " wings " (side-scenes) ; the dome, also, of the auditory, painted in sections, ready to be put in its place at the proper time, and other work which it is not necessary to speak of here. Without delay we made a contract for the lathing and plastering required, and put workmen upon all the different departments not already under contracts. We also had to make arrangements for lighting the house, which had to be done by spirit-gas, coal-gas not having at that time been introduced into the city of St. Louis. This lighting was effected by means of branch-lamps suspended around the front of the boxes ; the stage having for the " foot-lights " (front lights), square tin boxes, with large burners for spirit gas, a similar kind of box, only of triangular shape, being used behind each wing, with reflectors attached, to throw the light to the centre of the stage.

After obtaining a general idea of the work to be done before the house could be opened, and weighing the difficulties, I came to the conclusion that we might be able to open the house to the public on the 4th of July, the anniversary of our national independence. And this was my reply to the numerous inquiries of "when I expected to commence the theatrical season," which was generally met with the response, "You cannot do it!" As the work progressed, my conjectures became strengthened ; and being bantered with bets of hats, boots, etc., that I would not open on the 4th of July, I accepted some of them, and the sequel will show the result.

About this time I began to discover that we were proceeding on too extravagant a scale for our means, although they had been more than doubled on the amount that we had originally started upon. As I said before, Col. M. L. Clarke's ideas were always formed upon a large scale, and as they expanded, new ones would arise of still larger dimensions ; and in this way it was generally found that his conclusions of to-day were considerably in advance of those of yesterday. He had insisted upon having a *grand front* to the building, such as should "make it an ornament to the city." To this end he had contracted at the East, upon his own responsibility, for caps and bases of four magnificent Corinthian columns, in-

tended to support a *grand front portico*, and for which he generously said he would pay out of his own purse, should the stockholders object to the expense.

These columns were never put up, but remained stored away under the stage of the theatre until the building was sold to the United States government; and what become of them I have never heard.

As the work progressed, I became each day more impressed with the importance of our opening the theatre to the public on the 4th of July, if the interior of the building could be got into a proper condition; in fact, it became almost a matter of *necessity* that we should do so, for our season in Mobile had been prolonged much beyond the usual time; the weather had become quite warm in that Southern latitude, and the audiences diminishing rapidly in numbers. In addition to this, my partner was almost daily urging me by letter to hasten matters to a point that would enable us to occupy the house with our company, for our weekly receipts at Mobile were falling below the current expenses.

Under the pressure of these circumstances, every effort was made that promised to forward the work to a condition that would allow us to begin our season; and about the middle of June I wrote to my partner that I thought he might rely on our being in a position to commence our season on the 4th of July, and advising him to make his arrangements to be in St. Louis by the 1st.

On the 1st of July the company did arrive from Mobile, and the following Monday, the first play-day of the week, and my birthday, the 3d of July, I decided on for the opening of the new theatre.

The inside of the theatre was very conveniently arranged, consisting of three tiers or galleries of seats and a parquet. The first tier, or "dress-circle," would seat about three hundred persons; the second tier, or "family-circle," about three hundred and fifty; the third tier or "gallery," about four hundred and fifty, and the parquet about four hundred. The entrance to the first and second tiers and parquet was through a large vestibule twenty feet in depth by forty in width, thence through three large doors into the lobby of the first tier, which was uncommonly wide. Through the centre of the first tier was the passage to the parquet, and on each side of the lobby a flight of stairs leading to the second tier. The entrance to the gallery was from the outside of the building, to a flight of winding stairs having no connection with the other entrances. The stage was about forty-five feet in depth, from the front of

which to the front of the dress-circle was about fifty feet. The house being designed for a summer theatre, was constructed with a number of very large windows on each side, and the seats in the first and second tiers surrounded with handsome balustrades, turned of cherry wood, which being highly varnished, looked like mahogany. There was a ladies' retiring-room on a level with the first tier, furnished with refreshments and conveniences suited to such visitors. On a level with the second floor was a saloon for gentlemen, furnished with refreshments. Both of these saloons were closed before the conclusion of the season; the first, because a very small proportion of the lady auditors ever visited it, a notion having sprung up among some of the leading ones that their visits to the saloon might be misconstrued, apprehensions that the situation did not necessarily warrant. The gentlemen's saloon was closed because it was found to be an annoyance to the occupants, not only of the second, but of the first tier. There were three large doors opening from the saloon to the *auditorium*, and the loud talking that frequently took place there disturbed many persons who came to hear and enjoy the performance on the stage; so we shut that up before the season terminated.

On the opening of this house I made a beginning of a reform which I adhered to and carried forward in after years in all the theatres under my management. This was to refuse admission to any female to the performance who did not come attended by a gentleman, or some one having the appearance of a man of respectability, not even in the third tier; and women notoriously of the *pave* were never, under any conditions, admitted. The result of these rigid measures was that the third tier in our theatres was as quiet and orderly as any portion of the house.

On one occasion our vigilance for a time was eluded by two females of questionable character; one of them, in male attire, came as a gallant of the other. This usurper of the "inexpressibles" was imposingly finished up with a fine curly black wig and a killing pair of whiskers to match, and should most likely have avoided detection had there not been present, unfortunately for the intruders, an old gallant of one of them, who, eyeing closely this rather *distingué* youth, winked at him in a peculiar way, which wink was answered by a half-smothered laugh. This was too good a joke for him to keep, and he mentioned it to the head officer of our police, Mr. D. Busby, who, calling aside the *soi-disant* gentleman, and questioning him, he "confessed the cape," and was then permitted

quietly, but on the instant, to quit the theatre with his "Dulcinea." It must be remembered that there were no *matinées*, as at the present day, when ladies can attend theatres without male gallants.

I had a hard struggle for this scheme of reformation. There were several attempts made by lewd women and their bullies to pass the door-keepers having obtained tickets by sending boys and servants for them under the names of respectable citizens. However, I foiled their stratagems through the vigilance of a private policeman, well acquainted with such kind of persons by sight, and who knew how to deal with them. From time to time, for some two or three years following of my management in St. Louis and Mobile, and in subsequent years in New Orleans, I had sent to me through the post-office threatening missives, such as "cowhidings," "fisticuffings," and "shootings," and the like, for refusing admission to these *filles de joie*; but I persisted in my course, and finally gained my point.

The opening to our first performance was a matter of "touch and go" with us. The scaffolding that had been used to put up some decorations for the front of the boxes was being pitched out of side windows as the audience were coming in at the front doors, that had been opened promptly upon the time advertised. I did not perform on the stage the first night, nor until some week or so afterward, having as much as I could attend to in organizing the forces that were to be brought into action in the new house.

CHAPTER XLVI.

New Theatre, St. Louis, opens July 3, 1837 — Opening Address — Sioux Indian Chiefs — Col. Pilcher — Mrs. Drake — C. B. Parsons — Signor Vivalli — Biography of Mrs. Pritchard — Mr. Plumer and Mrs. Bailey — Drama of "Aaron Burr" — Marriage of J. M. Field and Miss Riddle.

As I have said in the previous chapter, our season in the new St. Louis Theatre commenced Monday, July 3, 1837.

Ludlow & Smith, the managers, had offered a premium of \$100 for a poetic address to the public, on the opening of the new theatre. Seventeen or eighteen were handed in to the "committee" of literary gentlemen appointed to make a selection, and their choice had fallen on one written by a Mr. Edward Johnson, of Greensburg, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Johnson was on that night in St. Louis, on his way farther westward, and went to the theatre, as he said, to ascertain what kind of an address it would be that should obtain the premium, and was unexpectedly and pleasantly surprised to find it to be his own. The "address" was spoken by Mr. Joseph M. Field, a member of the company, and received by the public with great applause. I record it in this book as a production of great merit, in the wish to do what I can towards passing it forward as matter worthy of record in the history of the Drama, and for the benefit or pleasure of future generations :—

When freedom's flag was wide o'er Greece unfurl'd,
And Delphi was the centre of the world,
The Drama first upreared the rustic stage,
To smoothe the manners and instruct the age.
And though hoar Time hath sped with ceaseless flight,
And crush'd the splendors of that age of light;
Though the famed monuments of that blessed day
Have fallen to earth, and moulder'd in decay;
Though, vision-like, two thousand years have rolled,
And Greece is not now what she was of old,
The Drama still, to kindly feeling true,
Loves the bright land where first her childhood grew;
Points to her *Thespis*, who, though rude in art,
Touch'd the warm feelings of each generous heart;
To *Æschylus*, who, madden'd while he sung,
And o'er the lyre a hand of phrensy flung;
To *Sophocles*, who, gorgeous and sublime,
Lives to this day, and only dies with Time;
And to *Euripides*, whose plaintive song
Seizes the list'ner as it floats along,

Leaves with the bosom liquid notes of woe,
 Steals to the heart, and makes the tear to flow!
 Where the rough Alps, with summits high and free,
 Look o'er the plains of fallen Italy, —
 The Drama there a look of pity throws,
 For there, in days of yore, her anthems rose;
 For then were heard the mirth and laughter loud
 When *Plautus'* muse addressed the Roman crowd;
 When *Terence*, too, poured forth the comic song,
 And cheers were high, — the laughter loud and long.
 Again she casts her searching eyes around:
 "Beware!" 'tis whispered, "this is holy ground!"
 Why? 'Tis on Britain's isle our footsteps stand;
 Nay! it is more — 'tis Shakespeare's fatherland!
 Here did that master all our feelings scan,
 Each nook, each recess in the heart of man;
 Here brilliant *Sheridan* Fame's laurel won;
 Here Johnson put his learned buskin on.
 Flush'd with fond joy, she turns with rapturous glance
 To vine-clad hills and sun-bright vales of France;
 Points to the Theatre with tragic mien,
 And marks the passion of the stern *Racine*.
 From those who pity, and those who kindly feel,
 She asks a tear, to shed with "*great Corneille*."
 Now, swift across the Atlantic wave she flies,
 Where, reared 'mid wilds, her beauteous domes arise!
 Each hill and dale her thrilling voice has heard,
 And *Forests* echo to the native Bird;
 Throughout our land, where'er she chance to roam,
 She finds a *resting-place*, — but here a *home*!
 We dedicate to thee, oh! goddess blessed,
 This thy *first* temple in the far, far West!
 Oh! fondly cherish this fair house of thine,
 And shed around thy influence benign;
 Let vivid images of bygone things
 Defile before our eyes like "*Banquo's Kings*."
 Let *Lear* again enact his frantic part,
 And sweet *Ophelia* steal the hearer's heart;
 Let the kind audience feel a fond regret,
 And weep with *Romeo* over *Juliet*;
 Let *Spartacus*, again from bondage freed,
 Not like a slave, but like a Thracian, bleed;
 Picture the scene where chaste *Virginia* fell,
 And point to "*freedom in the shaft of Tell*!"
 And may the sylph-like nymphs our joys enhance
 By mystic trippings of the fairy dance
 On Ariel's wing, and soft as brooklet's flow,
 Their footsteps falling like the flakes of snow, —
 Let their lithe forms in mazy circles run
 And grace receive what Taglioni won!
 Let these fair walls with echoes soft prolong
 The dulcet gushings of each soul-born song;
 Sweet as the euphony of Heaven's bright spheres,
 Strike the bland warblings on the list'ners' ears.
 Now, to our audience — honor'd, learn'd, and gay —
 The humble speaker hath one word to say:
 If e'er loath'd *Vice* should rear her hideous face,
 Or in this tragic fane find dwelling-place, —
 If e'er this house with scullion jesting rings,
 Or desecrated be to sinful things,
 Let the bold actor his presumption rue, —
 Be cursed the player and his temple too.
 But if the Muse, enlighten'd, never strays
 Far from the pleasant path of *Virtue's* ways,

Then shall fair *Learning* sanctify this dome,
 And *Joy* and *Science* fix their lasting home.
 The tragic muse shall high her sceptre rear,
 The sternest eye shall glitter with a tear.
 Mild *Thalia*, too, shall all our griefs beguile,
 And from the lips of sorrow steal a smile.
 The rudest hearts shall feel the genial power,
 And future ages bless this natal hour!
 Then o'er the player be your kindness shed,—
 Pour out a golden shower upon his head;
 And may this house be ever richly blessed,
 And *stars* arise hereafter in the *West*!

This address was followed by the performance of Tobin's admirable comedy of the "*Honeymoon*," with the following cast of characters: *Duke Aranza*, Mr. J. M. Field; *Count Montalban*, Mr. Barker; *Rolando*, Mr. M. C. Field; *Balthazar*, Mr. Hubbard; *Lampedo*, Mr. Sol. Smith, Sr.; *Jacques* (the Mock Duke), Mr. Thomas Placide; *Lopez*, Mr. Kelly; *Campillo*, Mr. Thomas Pearson; *Servants*, Messrs. West, Chambers, etc.; *Juliana*, Miss E. Riddle; *Volante*, Miss Petrie; *Zamora*, Mrs. Hubbard; *Hostess*, Mrs. Salzman; *Mrs. Lopez*, Mrs. Voght. Immediately after the comedy, Mr. and Mrs. Bennie appeared and danced a "tambour major jig." This was succeeded by the performance of the farce of "*Simpson & Co.*," cast as follows: *Mr. Simpson*, Mr. De Camp; *Mr. Bromley*, Mr. M. C. Field; *Mrs. Simpson*, Miss E. Riddle; *Mrs. Bromley*, Miss Petrie.

The prices of admission were as follows: Boxes and parquet, \$1.00; private boxes, \$1.50; all other parts of the house, fifty cents admission.

The architectural drawings of this theatre were from under the hand of Mr. George S. Barrett.

Our company consisted of the following persons: N. M. Ludlow, Sol. Smith, Sr., Joseph M. Field, Matthew C. Field, Vincent De Camp, Thomas Placide, Messrs. Fremont, Anderson, Hubbard, Anderton, Riley, Barker, Kelly, Jackson, Pearson, Thorpe, Newton, Sergeant, Jones, West, and Chambers; Miss Eliza Riddle, Miss Eliza Petrie, Mrs. Hubbard, Mrs. Salzman, Mrs. Kutz, Miss Voght, and Miss Henning; to which were added as dancers, Mr. and Mrs. Bennie; leader of the orchestra, Mr. Meyers; scenic artist, Mr. John R. Smith.

The second night's performance, being the anniversary of our national independence, we performed an American drama, written by Major M. Noah of New York, and entitled the "*Plains of the Chippewa, or She Would be Soldier*," with the following cast of the characters: *General Scott*, Mr. Hubbard; *Lieutenant Lennox*, Mr. J. M. Field; *Jerry Mayflower*, Mr. T.

Placide; *Hon. Captain Pendragon*, Mr. M. C. Field; *La Role* (a French valët to the captain), Mr. De Camp; *Christine* (in love with *Lennox*), Miss E. Riddle. During the play, Miss Henning danced the "Jackson hornpipe;" the entertainment of the evening concluding with the farce of the "Review, or the Wag of Windsor:" *Caleb Quotem*, Mr. De Camp; *Looney McTwalter*, Mr. Riley; *John Lump*, Mr. T. Placide. On Monday, July 10th, Mr. De Camp, our stage-manager, had a benefit, in accordance with his engagement, on which occasion the charming little Miss Meadows made an appearance for this one night only. Miss Meadows was a pupil of Mrs. Brown, who was a sister of Mr. De Camp. Miss Meadows sang two songs and danced; then performed in a petite drama called the "The Four Mowbrays," in which she performed four characters. The entertainment of the evening commenced with a comedy, in one act, called the "Soldier's Courtship." The evening concluded with the farce of "Mons. Tonson:" *Monsieur Morbleau*, Mr. De Camp; *Madame Bellegarde*, Mrs. Brown, who volunteered for that night only. The house was well filled, and the pieces went off admirably.

On Monday, July 17th, I made my first appearance in the new theatre, and was received by my old friends in a well-filled house and with the most flattering plaudits. The character of *Doctor Pangloss*, in which I appeared on this occasion, was one that I performed only occasionally, being somewhat out of the way of my regular line of genteel comedy. The play was admirably cast in most of its characters, and gave great satisfaction. I subjoin the cast: *Lord Duberly*, Mr. De Camp; *Doctor Pangloss*, Mr. N. M. Ludlow; *Dick Douglas*, Mr. J. M. Field, *Zekiel Homespun*, Mr. Thomas Placide; *Steadfast*, Mr. M. C. Field; *Kenrick*, Mr. Riley; *Henry Moreland*, Mr. Barker; *Waiter*, Mr. Anderton; *John*, Mr. Thorpe; *Lady Duberly*, Mrs. Salzman; *Cecily Homespun*, Miss E. Riddle; *Caroline Dormer*, Mrs. Hubbard. After the comedy a *pas de deux* by Mr. and Mrs. Bennie; the whole concluding with a new farce, entitled "One Hour, or the Carnival Ball."

Miss Meadows acted a few nights, and had a benefit. During those nights she acted the following characters, and danced and sang: *Variella*, in the "Weatherecock;" *Little Pickle*, in the "Spoiled Child;" and *Catharine*, in "Catharine and Petruchio." On this same night Mr. Fremont and Mr. Newton made their first appearance in St. Louis. July 20th, Miss Meadows in *Albert*, in "William Tell," and *Clara*, in

“Matrimony.” 21st, *Walter Arlington*, in the “Idiot Witness,” and *Kathleen*, in the “Poor Soldier;” on which occasion Miss Petrie performed the character of *Patrick*. July 22d, benefit of Miss Meadows, when she performed three characters, and sang and danced, viz., *Maggy McGilpin*, in the “Highland Reel;” *Falcone*, in the “Young Brigand,” and *Little Pickle*, in the “Spoiled Child;” concluding the evening by speaking a “farewell address.” Too much work, by far, for so small a body on a hot night in July.

On the 12th of August a band of Sioux Indian chiefs, nine in number, attended the theatre, under the conduct of Col. Pilcher, who was proceeding with them on their way to Washington City. The performance greatly astonished and delighted them, not one of whom had ever witnessed a theatrical entertainment before. The play performed was the grand mystical and musical drama called “*Der Freischutz*,” with all the accessories of proper scenery and machinery. In the enchantment scene, where the flames flashed up from the earth, the “wild host” rushed through the air, the moon turned blood-red, thunder rolled and lightning flashed, figures of the dead in their shrouds appeared, doleful groans and piercing shrieks were heard, and meteors flitted through the air, these Indian chiefs became greatly excited, and sprang to their feet, making an attempt to leave their seats, apparently quite alarmed, and would have gone out, had not Col. Pilcher detained them by a rapid explanation. But after they had got back to their hotel, and had the scene calmly explained to them by the colonel, they expressed great admiration, and asked many questions, — as, how these dead people were reanimated and made to do what they had seen performed. The piece had been well gotten up in regard to the scenery and machinery, and the music very respectably given by our stock company. Mr. J. M. Field was the *Caspar*, his brother, M. C. Field, the *Adolph*, and Thomas Placide the *Killian*. The play was performed for a considerable number of nights, to crowded houses.

After the run of this drama, the first “star” that we had was Mrs. A. Drake, who performed during her engagement, *Adelgitha*, *Madame Clermont*, *Evadne*, *Alicia*, in “Jane Shore;” *Marquette*, in “*La Tour de Nesle*;” and for her benefit, *Lady Macbeth*, with *Lady Contest*, in the farce of the “Wedding Day,” and finished with a recitation of the “Scolding Wife Reclaimed.”

Immediately following her came that wonderful youth, Joseph Burke. He commenced with the performance of

Romeo; *Mercutio*, N. M. Ludlow; *Peter*, T. Placide; *Juliet*, Miss E. Riddle; and he performed in the farce, the same night, *Terry O'Rourke*, in the "Irish Tutor." Next night, he appeared in an old man, personating *Sir Abel Handy*, in the comedy of "Speed the Plough." Between the play and farce he performed a concerto on the violin, composed by De Beriot, and concluded the night by enacting *Terry*, in "The Day After the Fair," in which he represented six different characters. The next night, he performed *Dennis Brulgruddry*, in "John Bull;" concluding the evening with the "March of Intellect," in which he represented six different characters, played an air on the violin, with variations, and danced a sailor's hornpipe. The next evening he performed *Sir Patrick O'Plenipo*, in the "Irish Ambassador;" concluding with an interesting drama, written expressly for him, in which he performed five different characters and played upon eight different musical instruments, and finally composed an extempore overture on the stage, instructing the orchestra how to accompany him without books. The following night Master Burke played *Doctor Lenitive*, in the farce of "The Prize, or 2, 5, 3, 8;" after which was performed another farce called "Touch and Take," and the evening's entertainment concluded with the eccentric farce of the "Omnibus;" *Pat Rooney*, Master Burke, in which he sang "Pat was a Darlin' Boy." Monday evening, August 28th, was performed Sheridan's admirable comedy of the "School for Scandal;" *Sir Peter Teazle*, Master Burke; *Charles Surface*, N. M. Ludlow; *Crabtree*, Mr. De Camp; *Lady Teazle*, Miss E. Riddle. The evening concluded with "Teddy the Tiler;" *Teddy Muldowny*, Master Burke. Master Burke's benefit was announced for the Wednesday following. On Tuesday evening, August 29th, Mr. Charles B. Parsons made his first appearance as a "star" before the St. Louis public, as *Damon*, in Shiel's play of "Damon and Pythias," the *Calanthe* of the night being Miss E. Riddle after which was performed "Charles the II." The following night was the benefit and last appearance of Master Burke, on which occasion he performed *Sir Patrick O'Plenipo*, in the "Irish Ambassador;" this was followed with a "musical melange," in which Master Burke performed a concerto on the violin, sang the Irish song of "Rory O'More," played a fantasia on the violin on one string, consisting of several Irish and other national airs. He then sang a duet with Miss Petrie, entitled, "When a Little Farm we Keep;" composed an overture on the stage; concluding with an Irish farce, played for the first

time in St. Louis, entitled, "More Blunders than One:" *Larry Hoolaghan*, Master Burke.

August 31st was performed N. H. Bannister's prize tragedy, written for Mr. Parsons, entitled "Caius Silius, the Slave of Carthage:" *Caius Silius*, Mr. Parsons; *Florena*, Miss Riddle.

This tragedy was not successful, yet there was some forcible language in it, and some good dramatic situations; but it was all *Caius Silius*. There was not another part in it, even among the females, that any person of talent would think it worth while to bestow much exertion upon. It was, therefore, generally in the hands of inferior performers, and required a greater histrionic genius than Mr. C. B. Parsons, in that one character to make it successful, if it could be made so at all.

It is a very mistaken idea that many would-be "stars" have been possessed of, that to make themselves positively prominent, and to stand out, as it were, in bold relief, all the other characters should be "subdued;" and where they have had plays written for them, instructions to that effect have been given to the writers. The result has therefore often been that pieces have failed because too much was put upon *one* person to do, and that one person frequently incapable of carrying such a load. September 2d, the third night of Mr. Parsons, was performed another new play, entitled, "Oranaska, or the Chief of the Mokawks." This was an Indian drama, *a la* "Metamora," but not as well written. After Mr. Forrest's performance of the Indian chief, *Metamora*, there was scarcely a chance for any other person to succeed in that line of character. The fourth night of Mr. Parsons's performance he appeared as *Lucius Junius Brutus*, in John Howard Payne's tragedy of "Brutus, or the Fall of Tarquin." This play was indifferently performed. Mr. Parsons could not satisfy an audience who had but a short time before seen J. B. Booth, Sr., perform this character; and further, in consequence of the illness of Miss Riddle, Miss Petrie had to undertake the character of *Tarquinius*. This was entirely beyond her ability, which was only good in comedy characters and singing parts. September 5th, the fifth night of Mr. Parsons, he appeared in the character of *Virginius*, in J. Sheridan Knowles's tragedy of that title. The *Virginia* of the evening was Miss Petrie, again out of her element; but she was a good and kind-hearted young lady, very considerate and obliging, and ready to sacrifice her own feelings to relieve a friend in

trouble. Blessed be her memory! She was a good and true woman.

The following night, September 6th, Mr. Parsons appeared in the character of *Othello*, to the *Iago* of Mr. J. M. Field; *Desdemona*, Miss Petrie; the continued illness of Miss Riddle still preventing her from appearing in this latter character. The next night, Thursday, September 7th, was the benefit and last appearance of Mr. Parsons, on which occasion was presented a new historical play, first time in St. Louis, entitled, "Rienzi, the Last of the Tribunes:" *Cola De Rienzi*, Mr. Parsons. The concluding piece of the night was the nautical drama of "Black-eyed Susan," Mr. Parsons performing *William* (a sailor). I believe this was the last appearance of Mr. Parsons on the "stage," in the city of St. Louis. The next time that I saw him, in a public position, was in the pulpit of the Centenary Methodist Church, corner of Pine and Fifth Streets, St. Louis, and heard him preach a very good sermon.

Signor Vivalla, calling himself "the wonder of the world," stretched the "gaping eyes of idiot wonder" for four nights, with "sleight of hand," and tricks of legerdemain.

Then came the untired and untiring Mrs. Pritchard, who commenced her engagement with the romantic drama of "Pizarro, or the Death of Rolla;" but on this occasion she had the good taste to appear in petticoats, instead of a short shirt and silk tights, and the ladies were the more obliged to her. She enacted *Elvira*, in this play, more like what it should be, according to my poor judgment, than any representative of it that I ever saw. On her second night she performed *Marguerette of Burgundy*, in "La Tour de Nesle," and *Madame Manette* in "Mischief-making." Third night, *Madge Wildfire*, in the drama of the "Heart of Midlothian," and *Massaroni*, in the "Brigand." Fourth night, *Isabelle*, in "Woman's Life," and *Mrs. Turtle*, in the farce of "Hunting a Turtle." Fifth night, *Marian*, in the tragedy of "Wallace, or the Scottish Chiefs." Sixth night, "Woman's Life," as before, with "Masaniello, or the Dumb Girl of Portici," in which she performed the part of *Fenella*, the dumb girl, and performed it well! The seventh and last night, and benefit of Mrs. Pritchard, was on the 19th of September, when was acted a new drama,—new to St. Louis, at least,—entitled "Alberti Contarini, or the Bandit of the Abruzzi," in which Mrs. Pritchard appeared in the title *role*; after which was performed "Wallace" for the second time.

Mrs. Pritchard was a favorite with the St. Louis public, and

deservedly so, for she was a very clever actress in all performances, especially such as properly suited her sex. Her benefit was well attended.

As this lady, I believe, never performed in our company again, and as her career was rather a remarkable one, it would perhaps not be unpleasant to my readers to learn more of her. She was born in England, about the beginning of the present century; her maiden name Frances Pritchard. She was raised on the stage, her parents being actors of some celebrity in the provincial theatres of her native country. This lady was remarkable, among other peculiar characteristics, for getting husbands, and then getting rid of them. Her first marriage was to a Mr. Pemberton, in England. He was an actor, who came to America some years afterwards; but, although a very fair actor in the tragic way, was never able to make a position as a prominent man. A separation took place between Mr. Pemberton and his wife in England, and the lady was shortly after known as Mrs. Tatnall, having, as it was said, been married to a circus-rider, familiarly known as Sam Tatnall. Sam was a man that esteemed a fine horse infinitely a superior animal to a fine woman, and therefore bestowed more of his tender attentions on the former than on the latter. This the lady thought was not a fair division of his affections, and upon her remonstrating with him on this course, it was said that he gave her some *striking* proofs of his estimate of her; which not proving satisfactory to her, she contrived to obtain a divorce from him. Her first appearance on the stage in New York was as Mrs. Tatnall, March 13, 1823, in the tragedy of the "Apostate," as *Florinda*, and on the same night as *Little Pickle*, in the farce of the "Spoiled Child." But being known as having been attached to a circus company, although she had not appeared in the "ring," many squeamish persons fancied that there was a stain of sawdust on her garments, and were not willing to allow her the merit as an actress which she really possessed.

She performed *Evadne*, in the tragedy of that name, and *Zorilda*, in the melodrama of "Timour, the Tartar," for her benefit, on the stage of the Park Theatre, March 26, 1823. In 1827, this lady performed under my management at Mobile, as a "star," being then Mrs. Hartwig. Her husband travelled with her, but did not act. In the summer of 1830, she again acted with me at Cincinnati, in the Columbia Street Theatre, her husband (Mr. Hartwig) then performing characters of minor consequence. He died soon after this. In 1834, she appeared at the Bowery Theatre, New York, as *Imogene*, in

the tragedy of "Bertram," for the benefit of Mr. C. B. Parsons, who enacted the character of *Bertram*. She then announced herself as Mrs. F. Pritchard, but really was then Mrs. Hosack, having but a short time before married Mr. Hamilton Hosack, son of the well-known and highly esteemed Dr. David Hosack, of New York City. But the marriage being distasteful to the family of her husband, she was induced to appear professionally as Mrs. Fanny Pritchard. In 1837, this lady and her husband, Mr. Hosack, were engaged by Ludlow & Smith for their theatres. Mr. Hosack, although a gentleman of good appearance and good breeding, was no actor, and of but little use on the stage. This lady's last appearance in New York was in 1836, at the Franklin Theatre. Her last husband was a Mr. Riley, once a member of our company, with whom she went to Texas, and died there in 1843.

On September 20, 1837, a benefit — a "complimentary" one — was given Mr. Alexander Crowl, the able superintendent and master-builder of our new theatre, on which occasion he was presented by me with a beautiful carpenter's "trying square." The blade was polished silver, the handle ivory, and the rivets gold, and inscribed on the blade, "We have tried him, and found him true." There was a well-filled house, and the audience and the recipient of the gift seemed equally satisfied. The performance of the evening commenced with the domestic drama of "Ellen Wareham, the Wife of Two Husbands," in which Miss Riddle made her first appearance since her illness. Then followed a *pas de deux* by Mr. and Mrs. Bennie; next, a recitation by N. M. Ludlow, being a "Dissertation on Faults;" then a comic song by Mr. Sol. Smith, Sr.; the whole concluding with the legendary drama of the "Children in the Wood:" *Walter* (a carpenter), Mr. J. M. Field.

September 21st was presented, for the first time in St. Louis, J. Sheridan Knowles's tragic play of the "Wrecker's Daughter," the principal characters of which were performed by the two Fields and Miss Riddle. The afterpiece of the evening was the comic opera called "Of Age To-morrow," in which N. M. Ludlow represented four different characters; *Maria*, Miss Petrie. The "Wrecker's Daughter" was repeated on the 25th, with the farce of the "Promissory Note:" *Scamper*, N. M. Ludlow; *Cecily*, Miss Petrie. The next night, the petit comedy of the "Liar:" *Young Wilding* (the Liar), N. M. Ludlow; after which the "Two Gregories:" Mr. Sol. Smith and Mr. Thomas Placide as the *Gregories*; *Fanchette*, Miss Petrie; concluding with the melodrama of

“Presumptive Evidence :” *Marmaduke Dorgan*, Mr. J. M. Field ; *Pennie McLaughlin*, Miss Riddle.

The three nights that followed were benefits ; one of them that of Mr. De Camp, on which occasion he enacted *Falstaff*, in the first part of “Henry IV.”

The following day (Sunday), Mr. Plumer, an English vocalist then popular in the East, and Mrs. Bailey, formerly Miss Watson, arrived in St. Louis, and were engaged for a few nights. They commenced the following Monday, October 2d ; with the performance of “Guy Mannering :” *Henry Bertram*, Mr. Plumer ; *Dominie Sampson*, Mr. De Camp ; *Gilbert Glossin*, Mr. Munden (his first appearance in St. Louis). This gentleman became a member of our stock company. *Julia Mannering*, Mrs. Bailey ; *Lucy Bertram*, Miss Petrie. Next night, October 3d, the operatic drama of the “Devil’s Bridge :” *Count Belino*, Mr. Plumer ; *Countess Rosalvina*, Mrs. Bailey. The following night, October 4th, the comic opera of “John of Paris :” *John* (of Paris), Mr. Plumer ; *Vincent* (his page), Miss Petrie ; *Princess of Navarre*, Mrs. Bailey. The next night, October 5th, the petit comedy of “Charles II. :” *King Charles*, Mr. J. M. Field ; *Edward* (his page), Mr. Plumer ; *Mary Copp*, Mrs. Bailey. In this piece, Mrs. Bailey and Mr. Plumer introduced songs, and the duet, “When thy Bosom Heaves the Sigh ;” after which the farce of “John Jones” was performed, and the evening concluded with the comic opera of “No Song, No Supper :” *Robin* (a sailor), Mr. Plumer, with the song of the “Bay of Biscay ;” *Margaretta*, Mrs. Bailey. Friday night, October 6th, was performed, for the benefit of Mrs. Bailey, the opera of the “Marriage of Figaro :” *Figaro*, Mr. Plumer ; *Cherubino*, Miss Petrie ; *Susanna*, Mrs. Bailey. The evening concluded with the vaudeville of the “Swiss Cottage :” *Lisette*, Mrs. Bailey. The following night, October 7th, was the benefit of Mr. Plumer, when was performed “John of Paris,” as before, and “Clari, the Maid of Milan :” *Jocoso*, Mr. Plumer ; *Clari*, Mrs. Plumer, who appeared for that occasion only. On the Monday following, we brought out for the first time in St. Louis the opera of “Cinderella,” with all the original music and splendid scenery. The piece was cast pretty much the same as in Mobile the previous season. We played “Cinderella” for six nights in succession to well-filled houses, and two additional nights, viz. : 21st and 28th of October. On the 18th of October I took my benefit, performing the comedy of the “Dramatist, or Stop Him who Can !”

Vapid (the dramatist), N. M. Ludlow; concluding with the farce of "My Master's Rival." Monday, October 23d, was the benefit night of Miss Riddle, when was performed the "Wrecker's Daughter," as before, and the petit drama of the "Youthful Queen:" *Christine* (Queen of Sweden), Miss Riddle. Thursday, October 26th, benefit of Mr. Thomas Placide, commencing with "Sweethearts and Wives:" *Billy Lackaday*, Mr. T. Placide; *Eugenia*, Miss Riddle; concluding with the "Golden Farmer:" *Jemmy Twitcher*, Mr. T. Placide; *Elizabeth*, Miss Riddle. Monday, October 30th, benefit of Miss Petrie, the comedy of "Man and Wife:" *Helen Worrett*, Miss Petrie; concluding with the "Loan of a Lover:" *Gertrude*, Miss Petrie. Wednesday, November 1st, benefit of Mr. J. M. Field, when was performed for the first time a tragic play entitled, "Aaron Burr, Emperor of Mexico," written by a gentleman of Alabama, of the name of W. H. Smith: *Aaron Burr*, Mr. J. M. Field; *Blennerhasset*, Mr. W. Anderson; *Theodosia*, Miss Riddle; *Mrs. Blennerhasset*, Miss Petrie. The farce of the night was "My Aunt:" *Dashall*, Mr. J. M. Field. The play of "Aaron Burr" was never performed again, "or if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million. 'Twas *caviare* to the general." Friday evening, November 3d, was the benefit night of Mr. Sol. Smith, Sr., when was performed the comedy of the "Hypocrite," compressed into three acts: *Mawworm*, Mr. Sol. Smith, Sr.; *Charlotte*, Miss Petrie; the evening concluding with the farce of the "Rival Pages:" *Victoire*, Miss Riddle; *Julie*, Miss Petrie. Saturday, November 4th, the last night of the season, was performed "Tom Cringle:" *Tom Cringle*, J. M. Field; *Elizabeth*, Miss Riddle; concluding with the "Rival Pages," as before, and "Loan of a Lover." Thus finished the summer and fall of 1837 at St. Louis.

A few days after the closing of the theatre, Mr. Joseph M. Field and Miss Eliza L. Riddle became man and wife. The happy knot was tied at the residence of their mutual friends, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Keemle:

CHAPTER XLVII.

Government Street Theatre, Mobile — Season of 1837-8 — Winter Season of 1838 in St. Louis — Stars in Mobile — Mr. G. Barrett — Biography of Mr. Barrett — Mr. and Mrs. H. Lewis — J. H. Hackett — Mrs. John Watson, Vocalist — Miss Ellen Tree — Mrs. Bailey, Vocalist — Biography — Ravel Family — Miss Clifton — Her Biography — Mrs. Shaw — Mrs. Gibbs, Vocalist — New Way of Counting an Audience — Mrs. Hodges, *alias* Miss Nelson — Miss Tree in St. Louis — Her Biography — John Sefton — His Biography.

IN the spring of 1837, there was a small frame theatre erected in the city of Mobile by a man named Ferry, — I believe his first name was Louis. He was a carpenter, and one with an aspiring soul that burned to be a manager; and in order to gratify the high aspirations of that soul, he built a theatre, — one that stood on the south side of Government Street, nearly opposite to where the “Barton Academy” is now located. This theatre would seat about five hundred people, having only a pit and one tier of boxes, small but comfortable, and the stage furnished with a number of well-painted scenes. Being situated in the centre of an aristocratic neighborhood, and convenient to a large portion of the theatre-going inhabitants of the city, he had possessed himself with the idea that he would “soon close the theatre of Ludlow & Smith.” A young man of the name of Wilkins, I believe, — Richard, or, as familiarly called, “Dick Wilkins,” — had been induced by Ferry to embark with him, *sub rosa*, in the management; and the latter had, by promising extravagant salaries, got together an unfortunate mixture of some good and some very bad performers, most of them of the latter kind, and had commenced his season before the arrival of our company. He succeeded very well up to the time of our opening, and then his business fell off, and dwindled away to less than half his expenses. The theatre treasury, shortly after, was found to be in a collapsed condition, then dissatisfaction and desertion ensued, and the whole concern suddenly subsided.

Our Mobile season of 1837-8 began on the 20th of November, with the comedy of the “School for Scandal:” *Sir Peter Teazle*, Mr. De Camp; *Sir Oliver Surface*, Mr. William Anderson; *Charles Surface*, N. M. Ludlow; *Joseph Surface*, M. C. Field; *Sir Benjamin Backbite*, J. M. Field; *Crabtree*,

Sol. Smith, Sr. ; *Moses*, Thomas Placide ; *Rowley*, Hubbard ; *Careles*, Fremont ; *Trip*, Kelly ; *Lady Teazle*, Mrs. J. M. Field ; *Lady Sneerwell*, Mrs. Hubbard ; *Mrs. Candour*, Miss Petrie ; *Maria*, Mrs. Kutz. The evening concluded with the farce of " My Aunt : " *Dick Dashall*, Mr. J. M. Field ; *Fredrick*, Fremont ; *Rattle*, Thomas Placide ; *Soberlove*, Hubbard ; *Mrs. Corbet*, Mrs. Salzman ; *Emma*, Miss Petrie.

If I recollect correctly, we had been performing about three weeks when the aforesaid Mr. Wilkins came to us and proposed to resign management, provided we would take his company off his hands and assume his liabilities to them. This we agreed to do, so far as regarded their salaries for the residue of his intended season, — that was from about the middle of December until the 1st of April ensuing ; and thus ended the management of Messrs. Ferry & Wilkins. Having thus added some dozen or more persons to our company, that previously was sufficiently full, we concluded our best policy would be to dispatch a part of them to St. Louis, and try what success could be obtained in a winter season in that city ; though aware that the theatre, having been built for summer occupancy, would be very difficult to warm during the cold term in that latitude. However, under pressure of the circumstances, we decided to make the venture. To this end, a small company was formed, and Matthew C. Field, a member of our company, a good actor and a reliable man, accepted the situation of manager *pro tem.*, until one of the firm could be spared from Mobile, to release him from a situation entirely new and undesirable to him. Relief was afforded him by Mr. Smith, whose family resided in that city, and who reached St. Louis early in February, 1838. Our winter season in St. Louis resulted in a heavy loss, and we never repeated the experiment.

Mr. George Barrett was our first " star " of the Mobile season of 1838, commencing early in January, with the character of *Colonel Damas*, in the " Lady of Lyons ; " *Claude Melnotte*, Mr. J. M. Field ; *Pauline*, Mrs. J. M. Field. On his second night Mr. Barrett appeared as *Goldfinch*, in the " Road to Ruin." His third night, he performed *Sir Peter Teazle*, in the " School for Scandal." He performed also in some farces, as *Jeremy Diddler*, in " Raising the Wind ; " *O'Callaghan*, in " His Last Legs," and other characters. Mr. Barrett's nights were but moderately productive ; his abilities as an actor were on the decline. As this gentleman at one time occupied an important station in the temple of the Drama, perhaps it would be well to say something more in relation to him.

George H. Barrett was the son of Giles S. Barrett. He and his wife were both of English birth; they came to America in 1796, appearing first in the United States at Boston. George was born at Exeter, England, June 9, 1794. His first appearance on the stage was in New York, in the play of the "Stranger," December 10, 1798, as one of the children of the *Stranger*. About a year later he appeared in Boston, as *Mortimer's* child in "Laugh when You Can;" but his first appearance as an actor really was in the character of *Young Norval*, in the tragedy of "Douglas," at the Park Theatre, New York, May 5, 1806, being then near twelve years of age, but tall for that age; on this occasion his father enacted *Old Norval*, and his mother *Lady Randolph*. George's performance of the character was such as to cause it to be repeated a few nights after. As he grew up he became a favorite genteel comedian, and though over six feet in height, he was withal graceful and gentlemanly in his bearing, both on and off the stage. On June 24, 1825, he married Mrs. Ann Henry, formerly Mrs. W. C. Drummond, who, having been divorced from Mr. Drummond, had resumed her maiden name of Henry. By this marriage Mr. Barrett had, I believe, but one child, a daughter, who, when grown up, married, I think, Mr. Philip Warren, and her daughter became Mrs. Joseph Jefferson. Mr. Barrett married a second time, a Miss Mason (not an actress), a resident, I believe, of some town in Pennsylvania. This lady died before her husband, leaving him two children, daughters; one of them, known as Miss Mary Barrett, was not long ago a member of Wallack's Theatrical Company, New York City. Mr. Barrett was acting manager for Charles Gilfert's Bowery Theatre, New York, in 1828. In 1840, he officiated in like capacity for James H. Caldwell, in the first St. Charles Theatre, New Orleans, and again in the Broadway Theatre, New York, in 1847. Mr. Barrett took a farewell benefit on quitting the stage, at the Academy of Music, New York, on the 20th of November, 1855, and died in New York, after a lingering illness, September 5, 1860, aged sixty-six years.

Mrs. Henry Lewis was the next name that appeared at the head of our play-bills as a "star." This lady went through her usual round of characters, excepting those of the male gender, which I most positively protested against, and in which I was sustained by her husband, a very sensible little man, and a tolerably good low comedian. Mrs. Lewis's engagement was productive of profit to the management, as was almost every

engagement of that season in Mobile. It was the best paying season we ever had in that city.

After Mrs. Lewis came Mr. James H. Hackett, who performed *Solomon Swap*, a Yankee, for his opening night, in "Jonathan in England." During the same engagement he performed *Falstaff*, in Shakespeare's Henry IV. (Part First); also *Rip Van Winkle*; *Nimrod Wildfire*, in the "Kentuckian;" *Sir Pertinax McSycophant*, in the comedy of the "Man of the World;" and in the farce of "Monsieur Tonson," in the character of *Morbleu*, an old Frenchman; and in an interlude entitled "Sylvester Daggerwood," the "*Mad Dunstable Actor*." He gave imitations of Charles Matthews, Sr., Edmund Kean, Thomas Hilson, and old Jack Barnes, in all of which imitations he was astonishingly clever. He gave likewise a short interlude called the "Militia Training," in which he represented *Captain Joe Bunker*, a Yankee officer drilling a company of raw recruits. This performance convulsed the theatre with laughter. Mr. Hackett's *Sir Pertinax* was, in my estimation, a failure, and it was so considered generally, I believe. His dialect as a Scotsman was imperfect; unfortunately for him, I retained a very perfect recollection of George Frederick Cooke in this character, whom I had seen in my youthful days, and whom the theatrical world, both in England and America, have ever considered the best and only true representative of the character, since the performance of it by the author, Mr. Macklin.

The engagement of Mr. Hackett in Mobile gave great satisfaction, and was profitable to him and to the management.

Mrs. John Watson, the vocalist, played an engagement of a few nights with us, but was not very successful. Although a good musician and possessing a fine voice, she was not very attractive, her person being rather bulky, and not prepossessing. This lady withdrew from public life shortly after her engagement with us, and in 1854 died suddenly of apoplexy in Philadelphia.

The chaste and interesting actress, Miss Ellen Tree, played an engagement with us for the first time during this season. Miss Tree had been in America a short time over a year, and we were apprised of her success in the Eastern cities, also of her reputation as an actress on the London stage; but we were not prepared to be enchanted, as we were when we saw her act, with her lady-like carriage, delicate conception of character, and exquisite representation of every personality attempted by her. I am under the impression she commenced with the character of *Lady Teazle*. I have no bills of this

season to which I could refer. She then played *Juliet*, following these with *Metitia Hardy*, in the "Belle's Stratagem;" *Rosalind*, in "Much Ado About Nothing;" *Pauline*, in the "Ransom;" *Marianna*, in "The Wife;" *Juliana*, in the "Honeymoon;" and in afterpieces: *Christine*, in the "Youthful Queen;" *Kate O'Brien*, in "Perfection;" and *Clarisse*, in the "Barrack Room," with other characters not now remembered. Her engagement was for two weeks, and the house was crowded every night, her benefit being over a thousand dollars.

Mrs. Bailey played an engagement with us this season, enacting a round of musical characters that delighted all who witnessed her performances. This pretty little blue-eyed, fair-haired woman, formerly known in New York as Miss Charlotte Watson, was the daughter of Mr. John Watson, a well-known musician, and step-daughter of the lady previously mentioned in this chapter, with whom she had lived until about a year previous to this time, — on no very pleasant terms. Mrs. (Thomas) Bailey was born in England, in 1817, and, it is said, was a flame in the heart of the renowned Paganini, the great Italian violinist. He succeeded—so the story ran—in persuading the young lady to run away with him, but the father found means to overtake them at their first stopping-place, and summarily interfered with poor Paganini's hopes and wishes. The daughter being under age, the marriage was prevented, and the little lady taken home by her father. It was said that this discord was attempted to be remedied by Paganini offering a considerable sum to the father for his consent to a marriage with his daughter; but papa considered it a base attempt to rob him of his child, and so he put a double bar upon his daughter's apartment. Thus it goes, — "the course of true love never *did* run smooth!"

The next attraction in the way of "stars," and a great attraction they were, was the "Ravel Family," — Gabriel, Antoine, Jerome, and François, and their assistants, — undoubtedly the best company in their style of performances that has ever been seen in the United States up to the present time. As pantomimists, gymnasts, and rope-dancers, they have borne off the palm of excellence to this present day. Every pantomime produced by them was most judiciously selected and admirably performed, without halting or failing. The artists employed, exclusive of the family, really were all excellent in their different spheres, and the whole establishment worked together in harmony and with an apparent good-will. It was a great treat to witness their performances, for every thing

was done with much order, celerity, and good taste. They performed with us ten nights, and the theatre was filled every night to its utmost capacity. We should have gladly retained them for a longer term, but their engagements being made in advance elsewhere, would not permit a lengthened time with us. I shall have occasion to speak of this company again hereafter.

Josephine Clifton played an engagement with us this season for the first time. It was short, and not very profitable to the actress or the managers. During this engagement we produced for her N. P. Willis's tragedy of "*Bianca Visconti*," but the play did not give much satisfaction.

Perhaps this would be as proper a place as any to give a short sketch of Miss Clifton's life.

Josephine Clifton was born in the city of New York, about the year 1813 (Ireland says). Her surprising beauty of face and person, her youth and aptitude, her fine voice and expressive action (for she had been well drilled by an experienced stager), commanded a success almost unprecedented for a *débutante*, and she soon became an acknowledged "star" of the first attraction. Miss Clifton received the best education that the ill-gotten wealth of an indulgent mother could procure. After travelling through the Union with great success, she visited Europe, and appeared at Drury Lane in 1835. Her first appearance on any stage was at the Bowery Theatre, New York, under the management of Thomas Hamblin, September 21, 1831, as *Belvidera*, in "*Venice Preserved*," supported by Barton as *Pierre*, and Hamblin as *Jaffier*. In 1837 she played at the Park Theatre, and produced the tragedy of "*Bianca Visconti*," written expressly for her. Her success as an actress was the result of careful training and an imposing personal appearance, combined with fair average talents, for she possessed little of the true fire of genius. As she emerged from girlhood, her tall and elegantly moulded person gradually expanded into Brobdignagian proportions, and her habits became so lymphatic as almost to preclude the possibility of study. At the time of her death, no other American actress, with the exception of Miss Cushman, had created so wide (we do not add, deep) a sensation; and had she combined the latter's commanding intellect and unwearied application with her own early unapproached personal requisites, she would have reigned the legitimate empress of our national stage. (So much for Ireland.)

This person, during the second quarter of the present century, was a favorite actress on the boards of many of the

theatres of the United States. It was said she was the daughter of a woman of unenviable notoriety, but one who had no connection with the stage. Who her father happened to be, was probably known only to the mother and a few of her intimate associates. A good education had been bestowed upon her by somebody, and being handsome, in some way she got upon the stage, when young and pure-minded. Her personal beauty soon made her a favorite with theatre-goers. In a very few years she commenced a career of "starring," but it never yielded her any considerable profit. She lacked the fire of genius and its inspirations. She died a miserable wreck, and a sad instance of the fountain of life being early poisoned by one who should have been its most vigilant guardian, but whose moral and social deformity was almost unavoidably stamped upon her child.

In July, 1846, she became the first wife of Robert L. Place, then manager of the "American Theatre," New Orleans, and November 21st died in that city; but her remains rest in Ronaldson's Cemetery, Philadelphia.

Mr. Hill played an engagement this season, going through a round of his Yankee characters, to paying houses; but his business was not equal to his former engagement.

Thomas D. Rice, *alias* Jim Crow Rice, went through his usual representations of the corn-field negro, to the delight of the public and the repletion of his purse.

Coney and his dogs formed a part of the medley of this season's business, but we found that dogs could not draw as much as horses.

Mrs. Shaw, afterwards known as one of the numerous Mrs. Hamblins, played a very successful engagement here this season, taking the public quite by surprise. She had but recently arrived in the United States from England, and few as yet had been acquainted with her clever representations of character, both in tragedy and comedy, that compared favorably with those of the highly finished artist, Miss Ellen Tree. I shall have occasion hereafter to say more in regard to Mrs. Shaw, in her succeeding engagement with us at St. Louis.

Mrs. Gibbs, an English singer, recently arrived in America, went through a short engagement with us this season. She was a plump little English body,—fat, fair, and forty,—who had a tolerable voice; her style was best suited to English ballad-singing. She sang the music of several English comic operas, and introduced songs in some of the lively farces of the day. This lady had a husband that travelled with her, a fat-headed John Bull, who was always on the look-out, lest he should be

cheated by the "Yankees." On the occasion of the benefit of his wife, this season, he was detected by one of the door-keepers of the theatre in a piece of cockney strategy quite equal to any Yankee trick I ever heard of. At this theatre the entrance to the "dress-circle," and the "parquet," or "pit," was through one door. At this entrance, just behind the door-keeper, Mr. Gibbs posted himself, in an overcoat with outside pockets. The left-hand pocket was pretty well filled with white beans; for every person who passed the door-keeper, he would deposit in the right-hand pocket one of the white beans. If any one passed that did not hand in a ticket to the door-keeper, he would drop in a black bean; for there were some who were on the free-list,—such as editors, and others. For a child he put in a half bean. All this was noticed by the door-keeper, who said nothing then, but reported the affair to the manager the next morning.

In the course of the forenoon of the day following the benefit, while our company were rehearsing, Mr. and Mrs. Gibbs called at the theatre, the former to get the money for his wife's engagement. During the time required for this business transaction, Mrs. Gibbs came into the green-room to wait for her husband. While thus seated, Mr. Joseph M. Field, then a member of the company, came into the room, and Mrs. Gibbs said to him, "How do you do, Mr. Field." Mr. Field threw himself languidly on a sofa, and said, "Mrs. Gibbs, I have not *bean* well lately; in short, I've *bean* very ill," laying a strong emphasis each time on the word *bean*. "Why, how is that?" said Mrs. Gibbs. "You seemed very well last night. "Yes," said Joe, "but, you see, last night I took a large dish of *bean-soup*, and I've had, ever since, a severe pain in the right side, just under my pocket." This was too much for the risibles of the company present, and a general titter and laugh succeeded.

Mrs. Gibbs seemed mystified, and probably could not understand that the merriment had a connection with the sharp trick practised by her husband on her late benefit-night. In the settling up of the engagement, I believe Mr. Gibbs was satisfied that no fraud had been perpetrated,—at least, I never heard that he hinted any thing of the kind,—and, I think, went away satisfied that in this one engagement, at least, he had not been cheated by the Yankees.

Mrs. Gibbs's maiden name was Gradden. She was born in London, England, in 1804, was a pupil of T. Cook, and made her first appearance as a public singer at the "Vauxhall Gardens," in 1821. Her first appearance on the stage was in

the Dublin Theatre, Ireland, in 1823; and in October, 1824, she made her *début* on the London boards, at Drury Lane, as *Susanna*, in the opera of the "Marriage of Figaro," and was well received. She made her first appearance in America at New Orleans, December 23, 1835, in her favorite character of *Susanna*, giving satisfaction to that critical public, whose cultivated musical taste was at that time unsurpassed on this continent. She performed in Mobile in the spring of 1838, as before stated, and afterwards in the theatre of Ludlow & Smith at St. Louis. Early in the summer of the same year, after playing in the United States for two or three years, she returned to England.

Mr. and Mrs. Hodges performed with us this season (1838), at Mobile and St. Louis, the lady appearing under her maiden name, as Miss Nelson. This lady was a perfect specimen of female beauty, but possessed very little dramatic ability. She danced and sang tolerably, but that was all; yet her personal beauty made her a favorite, especially with the bucks of the cities. Our Mobile season of 1837-8 closed on the 5th of May, and was one among the few profitable seasons made in that city by Ludlow & Smith.

In order to present to the people of St. Louis some of the best of those "stars" who appeared in Mobile, we dispatched a detachment of the Mobile corps, with a few persons from other sources, under the direction of my partner, Mr. Smith, who opened the season in St. Louis. The early portion of this St. Louis season was not productive of profit to the management. The weather at the close of March and beginning of April was cold and disagreeable; and the theatre, being calculated for comfort in warm weather rather than cold, could not be heated so as to overcome the unpleasant intrusion of Mr. Boreas. The opera of "Cinderella" was performed during this spring season, and was brought out with a fine display of scenery and other requisites, all in good taste and with the following cast of the principal characters: *Prince*, Mr. Brunton, a very good tenor singer; *Baron Pompolino*, Mr. De Camp, excellent in the character; *Dandini*, Mr. Sol. Smith, Sr., who sang the music correctly, and that was all; *Cinderella*, Miss Petrie; the two sisters, *Clorinda* and *Thisbe*, Mrs. Sol. Smith and Mrs. Hubbard.

Good business did not commence this season until the arrival of Miss Ellen Tree, who opened on the 15th of April, and played two weeks to crowded houses. This was the first visit of that admirable lady and distinguished artist, who left an impression on the affections of the good people of St. Louis

that has not been effaced by any artist that has followed her, although forty years have intervened.

The characters enacted by Miss Tree were nearly the same as those performed by her in Mobile, viz. : *Juliet*, in "Romeo and Juliet;" *Marianna*, in "The Wife;" *Lady Teazle*; *Julia*, in the "Hunchback;" *Constance*, in the "Love Chase;" *Ion*, and many others.

As the lady has many friends on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean who have known and admired her as Miss Ellen Tree and Mrs. Charles Kean, I shall insert a short biography of her here, as I have no doubt it will be acceptable to my readers.

Miss Ellen Tree was born in London, December, 1805. She was one of four sisters, who were all on the stage. Her eldest sister, Mrs. Quin, was the most famous English dancer of her day. Maria Tree (Mrs. Bradshaw) was a favorite singing actress, the original *Clari*, "Maid of Milan," in which character she sang the ever-renowned song of "Home, Sweet Home" (words by Payne, music by Bishop), that will never cease to be a favorite. Miss Ann Tree was highly successful in the line of singing chambermaids, and like characters. In her earliest efforts, Miss Ellen Tree was noted for her elegance and lady-like bearing in what is technically called "walking ladies." In 1823, she made her first appearance at Covent Garden, as *Olivia*, in "Twelfth Night." In 1826, she was a leading actress at Birmingham; 23d of September, same year, made her *début* at Drury Lane, as *Donna Violante* ("Wonder"). She went afterward to Covent Garden, and played the character of *Julia* ("Hunchback") so well that in the first production of "The Wife," another of Knowles's plays, she performed at its first representation the leading part of *Marianna*, which was particularly designed by the author for her, and was acted by her for about forty or fifty nights in the same season. She came to America in 1836, and made her *début* on the Park stage, December 12th, as *Rosalind*, in "As You Like It," and *Pauline*, in the "Ransom." Her success was perfect. She proved to be the most popular actress in her line, following Fanny Kemble, that was known to the Park stage. In the fall of 1837, she performed under the management of Ludlow & Smith, in Mobile, a round of her most popular characters, and drew fuller houses than any one that ever appeared there during their lengthy term of management in that city. After occupying about two years in making a tour of the States, she returned to England, to revisit us again in 1865; but her success was not what it had been in former visits to this continent. The lady had become much older in appearance, and her addi-

tional flesh had destroyed the beautiful outlines of her person, and we "could but remember that such things were."

Mr. John Sefton followed Miss Tree, with his representations of *Jemmy Twitcher*, in the "Golden Farmer." His attraction did not amount to much; for although the second tier and gallery were each well filled, the dress-circle and parquet were sparsely occupied. This gentleman had obtained considerable notoriety in the Eastern cities for his representation of the thieves and ragamuffins of the British metropolis, but the pictures he drew were not recognized in our Western cities at that time; consequently they were presented without a due appreciation of their trueness. John Sefton was unquestionably an artist in that peculiar style of representation.

As I shall not have occasion to speak of this gentleman again in the course of this work, I will say here that John Sefton was born in Liverpool, England, June 15, 1805. After playing two or three years in the provincial theatres of his own country, he came to America with his brother William, also a comedian, about the year 1826, and appeared in New York City. In 1828, he was engaged by the writer of this, who at that time had the management of the Chatham Theatre in New York, for a short term. In a few years after he grew into great favor with the play-goers of New York, and at one time was stage-manager for Mr. Niblo in his Garden Theatre. He died in New York, September 19, 1868.

Following Mr. Sefton in the St. Louis season came Mrs. Gibbs, who went through the same characters performed by her in Mobile, but she failed to attract full houses.

The Ravel Family then followed for two weeks, to crowded houses every night, delighting their audiences, as they always did wherever they performed. The two weeks of this engagement closed what we termed our spring season in St. Louis, and a vacation ensued of about one week. During this week Mrs. Sol. Smith, Sr., died and was buried in St. Louis.

Mrs. Smith's maiden name was Martha Matthews. She was born, I believe, in the State of Ohio, where her father taught music. After marrying Mr. Sol. Smith she took to the profession of the stage, and travelled with her husband; and while under his management, performed all the leading business in the small towns visited by him during his early peregrinations in the West. Having been early indulged thus with leading characters in tragedy, comedy, opera, and farce, she was very reluctant to descend to any thing below that position, and sometimes made objection; but generally she was good-natured and kind-hearted, a fond mother and a faithful wife.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Fall Season, St. Louis, 1838 — Miss Clifton — “Lady of Lyons,” First Time in St. Louis — John R. Scott — His Biography — Mrs. Shaw — Her Biography — Biography of Vincent De Camp — Llewellyn and his Horse — Mobile Season of 1838-9 — St. Emanuel Street Theatre Burned — Ludlow & Smith open Government Street Theatre — Mr. Forbes — Miss Vos — Her Biography — Dan Marble — Miss Tree — Edwin Forrest — J. B. Booth — Jo Burke — Bedouin Arabs — Miss Meadows — Celeste — Miss Jane Davenport.

THE fall season, as we called our after-season in St. Louis, commenced early in June, 1838, Miss Clifton being our first “star.” During this engagement we produced, for the first time in America, Bulwer’s play of the “Lady of Lyons,” Miss Clifton being the *Pauline* of the occasion, and Mr. Barton, an English actor, the *Claude Melnotte*. *Colonel Damas* was performed by Mr. De Camp, and well performed it was. The other characters were well supported, and no one, I presume, will be surprised when I say the play was well received. It could not be otherwise with this play, by far the best of Sir Lytton Bulwer’s productions for the stage. Miss Clifton’s engagement in St. Louis was fairly attended, although many persons drew unfavorable comparisons between her and Miss Tree.

Mr. John R. Scott was our next “star,” and opened, I believe, in *Damon*, in “Damon and Pythias.” He performed also *Virginius*, *Richard III.*, *Sir Giles Overreach*, and other leading characters. Mr. Scott was a man of considerable tragic talent, and in time, had he lived, would have been a rival to Mr. Forrest. I will here add a brief sketch of Mr. Scott’s career as an actor: —

John R. Scott was born in Philadelphia in 1808 (October 17th). His first appearance on any stage was at the Park Theatre, New York, July 2, 1828, in *Malcolm* (“Macbeth”). But, like his great antecedent, Thomas A. Cooper, who made his first appearance in the same character in Edinburgh, in 1793, his first effort was a failure. He then changed the scene of action, and tried the Boston stage, where he appeared at the Tremont Theatre in the humble condition of a servant in the comedy of “Speed the Plough;” a part of two lines in length, which were so imperfectly delivered that he was not for three

months or more permitted to speak even a line upon the stage, but was only used to make one in groups or processions, not being called upon to speak at all. However, his spirits and energy were equal to the occasion; he persevered and conquered. The next season he got better business, and in two years more he was allowed some leading characters in tragedy at the Arch Theatre, Philadelphia. Mr. Scott's second appearance in New York was on the occasion of the great complimentary benefit got up by the citizens of New York to honor John Howard Payne, November 29, 1832. On this occasion Mr. Payne's tragedy of "*Brutus*" was enacted, and Mr. Scott was assigned the character of *Titus*, *Brutus* being performed by Edwin Forrest. The next night he appeared in "*The Gladiator*," as *Phasarius*, to Mr. Forrest's *Spartacus*. August 11, 1834, Mr. Scott appeared at the Bowery Theatre, New York, in the leading character of *Virginus*, in Knowles's play of that name. He had now shown ability that in time would have made him a successful rival to Edwin Forrest, had he lived as he should have done; but that "invisible spirit of wine" had got possession of him, and soon destroyed a mind in other respects vigorous, and a person noble and commanding in its bearing. He died suddenly in New York, in the summer of 1856, in the forty-eighth year of his age. Mr. Scott visited England in 1847, and appeared at the Princess Theatre, London, but with only very limited success. He was an actor of the Forrest style, yet not a servile imitator of him.

About this time Mr. Hodges and Miss Nelson arrived in St. Louis, and played a short engagement, when the opera of "*Cinderella*" was revived, *Prince* being represented by Mr. Hodges, and *Papillo*, the fairy, by Miss Nelson. These additions were both improvements to the opera since its previous representations in this city, and the public seemed to appreciate it. Mr. Hodges had an excellent tenor voice, of great sweetness and compass, and had he been an industrious business man, would have left a great name in this country as a tenor singer. He returned to England about 1848, and I have heard no more of him.

Our next "star" was Mrs. Shaw. She acted the same plays, nearly, that were performed by her in Mobile. There was one exception, which was the play of "*The Wife, or a Tale of Mantua*." When the play was rehearsed, in the morning previous to the night on which it was to be performed, a difficulty arose between Mrs. S. and myself, that at one time wore the aspect of being the cause of considerable trouble; but, fortunately, I had been apprised of the positive nature of

the lady, and therefore brought into requisition a similar nature of my own, for I remembered words which Shakespeare has put into the mouth of *Petruchio*, in "Taming a Shrew:" "Where two raging fires come together, they do consume the thing that feeds their fury; and as the little fire grows great with little wind, so extreme gusts will blow out fire and all." "So I to her, and so she yields to me."

In the scene where *Marianna* and *St. Pierre* first enter on the stage together, and as strangers to each other, they shortly discover that they are both natives of Switzerland, and the lady has occasion to say that, "except in stature, she is not altered (though now *Duchess of Mantua*) from what she was when a child, amidst the mountains of Switzerland, and mistress only of this little cross;" which was suspended around her neck, and which *St. Pierre*, with wonder and astonishment, only gets a glimpse of, when they are intercepted by the entrance of the *Duke Ferrardo*, and *Antonio*, the lady's confessor. The latter in a stern manner desires the *Duchess* to order *St. Pierre* immediately to quit her apartments.

Now, the writer of this, happening to be the *St. Pierre* for the occasion, rehearsed the scene as he had usually performed it, repeating the words as set down by the author: "I go, your reverence, of mine own accord," and then bows to the lady, as about to retire. *Ferrardo* then comes down on the right of *St. Pierre*, touches him on the shoulder, and with a smile of triumph points to the door. This was followed by *St. Pierre* with a look of haughty contempt, and when about to exit at the door, with another look of an earnest and inquiring nature, gazed for a moment on the face of the *Duchess*, bowed and retired, the whole not occupying more than a minute of time. To have this properly understood, it will be necessary to state that this small, rude cross, as it came out in the last scene, was given to his sister, now the *Duchess of Mantua*, when as a youth he left his home and his sister when a child, amidst the mountains of Switzerland. To this business of *St. Pierre* Mrs. Shaw objected, and after some discussion she declared, in a most positive manner, that she would not perform that night if I persisted in going through that business. I then told her, in that respect she could do as she pleased, but if she did not appear I would put another lady into the character, and then go before the curtain and tell the audience the reason of her non-appearance; and she should never appear again in any theatre of which I had the management.

After a few minutes' pause and a few strides up and down the stage in a pet, the lady said to the stage-manager, "Go

on with the rehearsal ; ” and it did go on, and so did the lady at night, and we had no further trouble with her.

I shall now close this relation, already perhaps too long, with saying : I leave it to professionals and sound critics to say whether the business here mentioned by me was not in keeping with the character and the situations of the scene, and whether *Marianna* would not have followed the retiring movements of *St. Pierre* with a look of anxious inquiry, arising from the surprise and amazement evinced by him on beholding the little rustic cross, that he had carried for his sister when she was but a child. But Mrs. Shaw turned her back upon *St. Pierre*, and walked up the stage in quite an unconcerned manner. I subjoin a short sketch of this lady’s theatrical career :—

Mrs. Shaw (Hamblin No. 2) was of British birth, — whether English or Irish is uncertain. Her maiden name was Thewar. Her first appearance on the stage was as early as 1816, being then a child, probably five years of age. She was one of a number of children forming a Liliputian company organized to support the infantile efforts of Clara Fisher, who astonished all London that visited the Drury Lane Theatre in the above-mentioned year by her wonderfully precocious acting of *Richard III.* Eliza Marian Thewar, as she grew up, indulged the passion early created in her for the stage ; she became an actress, and performed in the various theatres of Great Britain in 1836, being then about twenty-five years of age. She came to America, and appeared at the Park Theatre, New York, July 25th, in the character of *Marianna*, in Knowles’s play of “ *The Wife.* ” She had been entirely unknown to the American public, and took them quite by surprise, but soon became a public favorite and an attractive “ star.” She was in the full flower of womanhood, and possessed an exquisitely beautiful form and expressive face ; eyes of the most expressive power, and movement full of animation. Although she was capable of playing tragic characters with power and effect, her greatest excellence lay in high comedy, such as *Lady Teazle* ; *Constance*, in the “ *Love Chase* ; ” *Beatrice*, in “ *Much Ado About Nothing* ; ” *Juliana*, in the “ *Honeymoon*, ” and like characters, in all of which she has never been equalled, probably, by any lady that as yet has appeared in the United States. She performed a few male characters with great success : *Hamlet*, *Romeo*, *Young Norval*, and *Ion*, acting the latter character with such excellence as to endanger the crown of laurel encircling the brow of Ellen Tree. In 1829, Mrs. Shaw transferred her great talents to

the aid of the "Bowery" manager in New York, by which she lost caste in the profession, although she perhaps gained more wealth. Mrs. Shaw was publicly announced as Mrs. Hamblin soon after the death of the first Mrs. H., which occurred in 1849. It was said that when Mr. Thomas Hamblin died, which was in 1853, he left this lady well off in worldly means. She died in New York, July 4, 1873.

I have mentioned the name of Mr. De Camp in the course of this chapter, and as this is most likely the only opportunity I shall have to speak of him again, I would like to record more of a man whose life, if fully and properly written, would furnish matter for an interesting volume. Mr. De Camp, during one portion of his life, was a favorite actor in London, lived in handsome style, kept his carriage, moved in good society, and lived in every way like a gentleman. Vincent De Camp was born at Vienna, Austria, about 1777, and came to England in early life, with his father, who was a musician. He first appeared on the Drury Lane boards in children's characters. When he reached manhood, he made his first appearance at Drury Lane as *Vapour*, in the farce of "My Grandmother," and was considered a useful performer of fops, coxcombs, and gay footmen. He was the brother of Mrs. Charles Kemble, and uncle of Fanny Kemble. He appeared first in America at the Park Theatre, November 24, 1823, as *Gossamer*, in "Laugh when You Can," and the *Three Singles*. He last played in New York in 1828; played with Ludlow & Smith at Mobile in 1837-8, and died in Texas, July 27, 1839.

Towards the winding-up of our fall season in St. Louis, Mr. Llewellyn and his splendid horse, Mazepa, amused the people for a week, drawing full houses. It might very naturally be expected that a fine horse should draw well.

About the middle of October we commenced the benefits of such of our company as were entitled to that consideration. Many of them were well attended, that of Mr. J. M. Field in particular. On his night was produced a short dramatic sketch written by himself, and entitled "Victoria," in which the *Queen of Great Britain* was the leading female character, and *James Gordon Bennett, Sr.*, of the New York *Herald*, the leading male character. The piece was, as the reader may naturally suppose, a burlesque, in which Bennett is represented to have visited England to interview the young Queen as to her future policy toward the United States of North America. The Queen is represented as being terribly afraid of committing herself to any wrong policy while in the hands of such an able diplomatist as Bennett; and the sketch had many funny

specimens of Scotch-Yankee impudence working on the fears of a timid girl. Mr. Field reserved the piece for his benefit nights, and on such occasions it was generally effective.

Our season in St. Louis this year closed about the end of October, and our company embarked on a steamboat for New Orleans, and thence by another boat to Mobile.

We commenced our Mobile season November 10, 1838, with a good comedy and farce, and played to a fair average of receipts for ten nights. On the night of the 20th of November, after the performance, which concluded with the melodrama of "The Miller and His Men," the St. Emanuel Theatre was burned to the ground.

The fire was discovered by a city watchman, between one and two o'clock in the morning, and was supposed to have been caused by some portions of the fireworks used to represent the blowing up, in the last scene, of the mill of the robber and pretended miller, *Grindoff*. I was informed of the fire about two o'clock, and reached the scene of destruction just in time to behold the roof sink amidst the flames, and to know that our entire stock of scenery, wardrobe, music, and books was destroyed; to which was added my own private wardrobe, then very valuable, which was consumed also, and not a dollar of insurance on any portion of the property owned by us. Now, this lack of insurance was not from any negligence on our part, but simply because none of the insurance offices of Mobile would take a risk on theatres, on any terms. The building did not belong to us, but was owned by two, or perhaps three, citizens of Mobile.

I have mentioned in a former chapter, that a Mr. Ferry had built a small theatre in Mobile, with the intention of becoming manager of it, but soon found that, like most other kinds of business, it required an intimate acquaintance with it to stand any chance of success. This theatre was now for rent, and we rented and opened it on the 1st of December, 1838.

Miss Mary Vos, a young actress, and popular in Mobile, was accorded a week as a "demi-star," playing the usual "star" parts of the day: *Julia*, in the "Hunchback;" *Mrs. Haller*, in "The Stranger;" *Lady Teazle*, in the comedy of the "School for Scandal," and like characters. At the end of this week, Mr. William Forbes arrived in the city, and was engaged by us for a few nights, opening in the character of *Macbeth*, the *Lady Macbeth* of the night being Miss Mary Vos, who performed it for the first time on this occasion. Mr. Forbes's engagement was not profitable to either the managers or himself.

Having mentioned the name of Miss Vos, I would like to say somewhat more of her, as she was a well-known and popular actress for many years in the South and West, as Mrs. Stewart. Mary Vos was born in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1815. Her father, John H. Vos, was a house-painter by trade, but at different periods of his life appeared on the stages of the Western and Southern theatres, and was considered, in his day, a tolerably good actor. Mary Vos was educated for the stage, and in time displayed considerable capabilities for the profession, but was lacking in polish and refinement. She married Alexander Stewart (no actor), of Mobile, about 1838, by whom she had two children, daughters, named Mary and Scotia, who are, I believe, both living at this time. She was reared in the Western theatres, her father and mother both being stage-performers. They were all members, at different times, of the companies of N. M. Ludlow, and Mrs. Stewart, of Ludlow & Smith's. Mr. Ireland speaks thus of her: "August 4, 1835, Miss Vos, from Mobile, made her first appearance in New York (at the Park): *Julia*, in the 'Hunchback.' She subsequently appeared as *Lady Teazle*, *Marianna*, *Mrs. Beverly*, *Miss Dorrillon*, *Rachel Heywood*, *Portia*, *Ernestine* (melodrama, 'Sonnambula'), and *Zephyrina*, in the farce of 'Lady and Devil.' "

Mrs. Stewart died at the house of the writer, Mobile, May, 14, 1855, aged forty years, and was buried in a cemetery of that city.

Mr. Dan Marble went through a round of his usual Yankee characters early in this season, and with his usual good success. Miss Ellen Tree followed shortly after, and played a successful engagement, but it did not equal that of her previous seasons; but her benefit was good, and evinced that the Mobile public still appreciated her excellence. Mr. Edwin Forrest followed Miss Tree, and performed to crowded houses almost every night for two weeks, and his benefit night tested the capacity of the theatre for accommodations to its full extent. The house was filled to overflowing. Mr. J. B. Booth, Sr., followed Forrest, in an engagement of a certainty of one hundred dollars per night, but he got into one of his insane or drunken frolics (call it which you please), and ruined the engagement. He had but two full houses, — his first night and the night that he performed *Richard III.* Mr. Booth, in this instance, was guilty of an act of great injustice toward us. He started with an excellent promise of a remunerative business to the managers, and as they were to pay him one hundred dollars per night, he was bound in honor to do what

he could to prevent their losing money, when they agreed to give him all that he asked for his services. But the *fiend* had got possession of him, and reason and justice had been driven out. Master Burke, the great little boy, came next, delighting his audience as usual, and filling his own and the managers' pockets. After Master Burke came a troupe of Bedouin Arabs, who literally jumped into the good graces of the public, and *walked* off with some more money than they came with. Miss Meadows, the sweet little girl, charmed the people for a few nights. During this season, Celeste, the magnificent, played another engagement with us, but it was not equal to the one of the previous season in this city. Then came Miss Jane M. Davenport, then supposed to be a youthful prodigy. This young lady, with her father and mother, were supposed to have been the originals of Dickens's Crummels Family, in "Nicholas Nickleby." How true this may be I will not undertake to say, but certain it is that there was a strong resemblance between them and those personages. Miss Davenport's engagement in Mobile was a failure, and her benefit only \$130. But the fact is that the young miss was too large to have her efforts considered wonderful as a child, and she was not sufficiently developed to be considered a woman. This unavoidable drawback was strengthened by her parents still endeavoring, by dress, to make her appear a juvenile prodigy. Not long after this the young miss withdrew from the stage for a few years, to reappear a fully developed and charming actress. I will add a few lines here in regard to her professional career: Jane M. Davenport appeared at the Park Theatre, as *Young Norval*, 18th of July, 1838. She played, during the engagement, *Shylock*, *Little Pickle*, *Sir Peter Teazle*, *Sir Giles Overreach*, *Richard III.*, and others. After a year or two as a youthful prodigy, she withdrew from the stage; and being grown to womanhood, reappeared in New York, at the Astor Opera-house, as *Juliet*, September, 1849. In 1860 she was in San Francisco, where she married Gen. (then Colonel) F. W. Lander, and left the stage. Her husband was in the Union army. He died in Virginia, March, 1862, from wounds received in battle. In February, 1865, she returned to the stage, and appeared at Niblo's Garden with great success and applause, with her name in the bills of advertisement as "Mrs. General Lander."

This Mobile season closed early in May, 1839, with the benefit of Mrs. J. M. Field, the receipts being about four hundred dollars. Mrs. Field was highly amiable lady and a charming actress, and was duly appreciated by the Mobile public.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Great Fire in Mobile, 1839—Yellow Fever—Government Street Theatre Burned—Summer Season in St. Louis, 1839—Mme. Celeste—Her Biography—"Jewess" brought out—Mr. and Mrs. G. P. Farren—State Street Theatre, Mobile—Playing to one Person—Two Stars same Night.

EARLY in the spring of this year a detachment of our company had been sent to St. Louis. To these was now added the main portion of our company, under the direction of my partner, Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith's family were in St. Louis, and it was agreed between us that he should take charge of the company for the summer, and that I should remain with my family, who resided in Mobile. The main object in my remaining in Mobile was to set on foot and endeavor to obtain subscriptions for the erection of a new theatre in that city. But an element of destruction suddenly made its appearance, defeating our scheme, and destroying a large portion of that pretty little city. This was fire! Incendiarism commenced its work of destruction, and laid in ashes probably one-third of the best part of the Bay City. These fires occurred at intervals of several weeks, and about the last of September or beginning of October the theatre we had last occupied, on Government Street, was swept away, with all the scenery, furniture, and property that had been left therein. Fortunately for us, this time our wardrobe, music, and books were with our company in St. Louis. By one of these fires I lost a dwelling-house, but it was not occupied, my family residence for the summer being on some property owned by me in the suburbs of the city. My dwelling burned was insured for about one-half of its value.

These disasters brought up a frightful prospect for me in the perspective. To make the matter worse, the yellow fever had commenced its ravages, with a malignancy never known in Mobile before or since. The future looked gloomy indeed. A stock company of actors, musicians, carpenters, and painters engaged to begin their services in November; "stars" engaged at certain periods following thereon; a large portion of the best part of the city in ashes; families in

mourning for their dead. Frightful! Dreadful! I would have willingly abandoned the season, and not have performed there for at least a year, but I had the above engagements to fulfil, and in the midst of a fearful epidemic I went to work to hunt up some building that could quickly be fitted up for theatrical purposes, and in which we might fulfil our contracts. After risking my life daily, in peering into closed warehouses and other large buildings that had been shut for weeks and abandoned by their frightened occupants, I could find only one that could be rented, and that stood in the northern extremity of the city, in the midst of cotton-warehouses, and beyond the reach of paved sidewalks. But with all these disadvantageous circumstances before me, and fully sensible of them, I took the building, having to buy it and the ground to obtain possession.

Almost every mail brought a letter from my partner, urging me to get some kind of place ready soon, for they could not stay in St. Louis after the 10th of November without losing a considerable amount of money, and that the receipts were even then falling below the expenses. For two or three days I hesitated as to the course I should pursue. At times I thought it best for us to abandon the Mobile season of that year entirely, and dividing our company, travel with them in different directions, to the small towns of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Alabama. But, then, what was I to do about the "stars" that were engaged to play with us in Mobile for the coming fall, winter, and spring? We should be assaulted with suits for damages and heavy unwarranted demands, or perplexed with endless attempts to compromise with them. These things duly considered, I finally determined to go to work in the best way I could, and get, as Smith said, "some kind of place ready" to receive the company. And at this day, nearly forty years after the period referred to, I consider it the best we could have done under the circumstances in which we were then placed. We fulfilled our contracts with our company, and preserved our credit with "stars" for reliability and punctuality.

Not having been in St. Louis during the summer season of 1839, I shall not attempt to particularize the events that then transpired; my partner, Mr. Sol. Smith, has given an account of it in his book, and to the small glorification of himself. I shall only touch upon a few matters in a general way, and then pass on to the following Mobile season.

Madame Celeste was the first "star" of the St. Louis season

of 1839, but her engagement was not as successful as those of previous seasons in that city. I will here insert a biography of her : —

Madame Celeste, the great danseuse and pantomimist, was born in Paris, France, August 6, 1814. While yet a child, she appeared upon the stage with those great performers, Talma and Mdle. Pasta. Her first appearance in America was in the Bowery Theatre, in New York, March 7, 1827, as a danseuse only. She immediately became a great favorite. Her second engagement was at the Park Theatre, New York, on the 27th of June, in a *pas seul*, in which she achieved great eclat. In 1828, she married a Mr. Elliot of Baltimore, being then only fourteen years of age, but tall and well developed. Mr. Elliot was of a good family, but very fond of horse-racing, and in the indulgence of this passion lost most of the fortune that she had acquired by her talents and industry. In 1829, she made a tour through the western and southern portion of the United States, accompanied by her sister Constance, and performed in my theatre at Louisville, Kentucky, in the fall of that year. Shortly after, it was discovered that she had dramatic talent, but not being able to speak the English language, she was precluded the opportunity of displaying it on the American stage. In order to add variety to her performances she played pantomimic melodrama, in which she succeeded admirably. Her acting in pantomime, for capability and intelligence has never been equalled by any one in the United States, excepting always that prince of pantomimists, Gabriel Ravel. At the time she appeared with us in Louisville, she was as beautiful as a *houri*, and as lithe and graceful as a fawn. She literally bounded into the hearts of her audience. From this city onward, west and south, her engagements for years were nothing less than a series of triumphs. After performing in nearly all the theatres of any consequence in America, she returned to Europe, and became highly popular in many cities of that continent. Her performance in "La Bayadere," also in the "French Spy," and in many other dramas, has never been equalled by any person attempting them in the United States.

In 1846, the following paragraph appeared in a Western newspaper : " Miss Elliot, daughter of Madame Celeste, the celebrated danseuse, had been brought up in the family of Mr. Johnson, a wealthy banker of Baltimore. Mr. J. had a son about the young lady's age, and a few days since they walked out together, called on a gentleman who wears a black coat, and returned home tied for life. In the evening, the young

gent introduced the young lady as Mrs. Johnson, to 'pa' and 'ma;' and pa and ma, as the thing was done, concluded to be perfectly satisfied."

Madame Celeste made many voyages between Europe and America, her last visit to the United States being in 1865, at which time she appeared at the Broadway Theatre, New York; but her attraction was not what it had been in former days. Time and trouble had done remorseless work on that once beautiful, expressive face and perfect form; and the greatly admired and formerly attractive Celeste passed among us and from us like the departing glories of the setting sun. She was still living in 1877, in Europe, and was wealthy.

After the engagement of Madame Celeste, Mr. Dan Marble performed a few nights, but only with moderate success.

Following Marble came a combination formed of Mr. George H. Barrett, John R. Scott, and young Master Joseph Burke; but, for some unaccountable reason, they did not draw good houses, or at least not such as talent like theirs was entitled to.

Mr. and Mrs. John Sloman then followed for a few nights, but their engagement was a failure; and yet Mrs. Sloman was certainly a very fine actress of the old-school style. After a few benefits, the spring season closed July 4th.

After a vacation of five weeks, the house reopened for the fall season, when was produced, for the first time in St. Louis, the fine drama of the "Jewess," founded on the novel of "Ivanhoe," with entirely new scenery and dresses. The leading characters, *Isaac of York* and his daughter *Rebecca*, were performed by Mr. George P. Farren and his wife, and I was told they were well played; but the play did not draw as it should have done.

The fall season in St. Louis, of 1839, was a miserably dragging one; the receipts becoming smaller and smaller, and "beautifully less." The season closed December 11th, and the company embarked for Mobile, by the way of the Mississippi River and New Orleans, arriving in Mobile about the 24th of December. I shall now refer to the state of affairs in Mobile.

After writing to my partner at St. Louis, Mr. Smith, informing him of the dilemma I was in, the difficulties I had in procuring a building that could be suddenly transformed to answer our purpose, also the necessity that had compelled me to avail myself of the location determined on, I went to work to hunt up carpenters, bricklayers, and other workmen necessary to commence preparing a temporary theatre. As Mr.

Smith has stated in his book that there was a large hall left standing after the great fire, and intimating that I might have procured that, notwithstanding I had informed him at the time of the impossibility of my getting it, I will state here now, that my readers may understand, the facts of the case: This building was called the "Alhambra," standing on Royal Street near Dauphin. It was leased by a Mr. Burling Brown for a drinking-saloon, with a large room above for billiard-tables. It was the first building that attracted my attention, but Mr. Brown was not in the city; he had gone East during the summer, and no one could tell me where a letter would reach him, or when he would return to Mobile. He did not return until I had begun my work, and then informed me he had arranged for the Chapman Family to occupy his hall for the season. They opened early in December, and closed shortly after we opened our theatre, the business not paying them. Their attempt at a season was a *failure*, and they never tried it again. How could it have been otherwise? One-third of the best part of the town was in smoldering ruins, and one-third of the people sad for the loss of either property or friends. Who could have expected a theatrical season to be successful under such circumstances? I am sure I did not, and I was not disappointed.

Nevertheless the State Street Theatre, under the management of Ludlow & Smith, opened its doors December 31, 1839, with a good comedy and farce, to *seventy-one dollars*. This theatre was about one hundred and ten feet long, forty wide, and about the same number of feet high. The auditorium was about sixty feet in depth, with seats rising in amphitheatre style, on an inclined plane. These were covered with some colored cotton, and the sides and ceiling covered with white cotton, for I could get no plastering done; nearly all good mechanics had left the city, and were afraid to return until frost had killed the yellow fever. The stage part of the building was built of brick, in depth about fifty feet, the other part of the house being wood; and we opened with about four scenes, with three necessary wings, painted by young Joe Cowell, who was sent to me from St. Louis. This house could accommodate about six hundred persons. The price of admission was one dollar for each person, except children,—fifty cents for them. During the engagement of the "Ravel Family," this building was filled almost every night to its entire capacity. This engagement and that of Madame Le Compte, a danseuse, were the only occasions on which the house was filled during the season. There was *one night* — "be that night forever

blotted from the calendar," — when there was but one person as an auditor, that paid, and he could not understand a word of the English language. I am almost tempted not to say a word more on this subject. Mr. Sol. Smith, in his book, has made such a good story of it that I feel a reluctance to spoil it by giving the facts in the case. But history should be a record of truths, as near as the writer can state them.

Of all the stormy nights (and we had many that season) that I ever witnessed in that region, this one night referred to was the most violent. It reminded me of the one described in the Scriptures, when the windows of Heaven were all opened; the rain came down like the rushing of a thousand torrents. It was an invariable rule with us never to postpone on account of weather; so, at the time advertised, up went the curtain to *one solitary man*. There were two "stars" on the bills of the night, Mr. Edmund S. Connor, in the play of "Tortosa, The Usurer," and Herr Cline, the then celebrated performer on the tight-rope. The five-act play was acted entirely through, without any additions to the audience except some of the musicians and two or three comic actors not in the play. Mr. Cline then made a very earnest appeal to the management to spare him the labor and mortification of going through his performance to this one man. We replied that unless this one man would go away *willingly*, the entire performance must be gone through to the *bitter end*. A member of the orchestra, Mr. Louis Merchant, was deputed to open the case to the one man; but he could not understand English. Mr. Merchant then tried him with French, with quite as little success; he then at him with German, — it was "all Greek" to the man, and Louis gave up the matter in despair. I then bethought me of a Spaniard who had an oyster-stand hard by; as a last resource, I sent for him. The oyster-man came, and after informing him of what we wished to accomplish, I gave him a dollar to enlist him in our cause, and another for the one man, provided he would go away. The oyster-man commenced to open up his case. The one man opened his eyes with a stare, and then his mouth for the first time, and replied to Diego's address, in Spanish: "I came here to see the man perform on the rope; I have been here two hours waiting for it, and I am not going away until I have seen him." The man was a Spanish sailor belonging to a vessel lying at the wharf, and seemed a determined sort of fellow. Diego came back to us, saying he could do nothing with him. He was then given a ticket, and told to invite the man to take some oysters, and to ply him with liquor, and keep him in conversation until the

theatre could be closed for the night. This was faithfully and successfully carried out, and the man on his return found the house closed. Diego gave him a dollar for the one he had paid to get in the theatre, and a ticket, with which he had been supplied, and told him that if he came the next night he would see the rope-dancer. The man then went away, but was there the next night. These are the plain facts of the matter, Mr. Smith's story to the contrary notwithstanding. I think Mr. Smith was altogether out of his element on the stage; and had he turned his attention to writing works of fiction, he would have rivalled Dumas or Victor Hugo; the inventive faculty was largely developed in him. This modern Munchausen makes himself merry over what he calls the "Swamp Theatre," *awa-a-a-y out in Orange Grove*.

Now, I wish it understood that this "Orange Grove" he speaks of had not a tree of any kind upon it. Many years before, it had a few orange-trees growing on it; and when laid out into town-lots, to be sold as such, was designated as the "Orange Grove" tract. Mr. Smith avails himself of this to make it appear "way out of town." It was only five squares from the post-office, and only four squares from where Mr. James H. Caldwell, two years later, built a large theatre. Mr. Smith speaks of having to travel over bridges to reach this temporary theatre. This will be better understood when I state that, in order to indicate where the sidewalks would be when paved, stretchers of lumber had been let into the sand on Royal Street and cross streets, and over these stretchers were laid small sloping platforms of about four feet in length, that foot-passengers might get over the gutters dry-footed, whenever they had one of those deluging rains that often occurred in that latitude. These were the mole-hills that Mr. Smith magnified into mountains. Truly, this man was a magician; he could make things appear to be just what he would have them. He would have succeeded better as a conjurer than he ever did as an actor; he mistook his calling.

While on this subject, I shall refer to another statement made by Mr. Smith in his book,—that wherein he says "the losses of this season were not less than one thousand dollars per week." Now, this is simply wilful and ridiculous misstatement. The entire expense of running the theatre for this season did not exceed nine hundred dollars per week. We certainly took in some money towards paying this nine hundred dollars. Our company had been reduced in numbers before commencing this season, in anticipation of a bad one. Mr. Lennox, Mr. Duff, and others were not retained for Mo-

bile. The salaries paid to actors, male and female, composing the "stock companies" of those days were scarcely half as much as are now paid to those of the same grades. Then, again, we paid no rent for our theatre, which constituted a heavy item in the weekly expenses of such establishments. The whole outlay for the new brick addition that was put to the old frame portion, together with seats and scenery, did not amount to four thousand dollars. At the closing of the season there were a few small sums due to the performers on salaries, and some benefit-money due Mr. and Mrs. Farren,—in all, perhaps a thousand dollars, not more. All of these debts were paid the following season in St. Louis. A back debt due for carpenter and brick-work, with a small bill for hardware, not exceeding two thousand dollars altogether, were paid from the profits of the ensuing fall season in New Orleans. Now, Mr. Smith says that "the losses of the Mobile season, here referred to, and which were paid out of the New Orleans season, were not less than twelve thousand dollars." "Prodi-gi-ous! Eleven buckram men grown out of two!" Falstaff is nowhere, compared with the magician Sol. with a steel-pen in his hand.

I desire to make a few remarks on what I consider his ungenerous manner of speaking of this short season of 1839-40, in what he facetiously calls the "Swamp Theatre," and then I shall proceed with my journal as before. He says our regular season closed about the 1st of March, but we made an "after-season." Now, why should we have made an "after-season" if the business had been, for the time just passed, so very disastrous? I, who was willing to admit that the season was a losing one, was opposed to having an "after-season;" but Smith, who wished to give his friend Mr. Barnes an opportunity of playing his daughter as a "star," could find it in his heart to keep the house open for an "after-season." For this purpose it was necessary to retain a portion of our company, and I was to proceed to St. Louis with the other portion. Now, the reader should understand that Mr. Barnes and family — Mrs. and Miss Charlotte Barnes — were not among the regular stars engaged by us prior to the commencement of the season, but they had wandered out to the South, to return to New York by the West, depending upon such chances as they could get to play in the cities and towns that lay in the way of their route. Their main object was to give their daughter, then preparing to make a start in the profession, as much practice as possible before making a grand attempt in the cities of the East.

Mr. Smith was willing to cater to this scheme of his "old friend, Jack Barnes," although it might increase the "enormous losses" of Ludlow & Smith. He speaks of "amateurs" helping to make up the company. These amateurs were — one person; a Mr. Anderson volunteered to perform *Sir Thomas Clifford*, in the play of the "Hunchback;" *Julia*, Miss Barnes; *Helen*, Mrs. Barnes; *Fathom*, Mr. Barnes. Sol. Smith had made the acquaintance of Mr. Barnes while he was in New York, during the summer of 1835, and felt flattered that "old Jack" should condescend so much as to perform in any theatre under his management. The engagement of the Barneses was like some of the others — a failure, and added somewhat more to the frightful picture drawn by Mr. Sol. Smith in his book. But I have done now with the disgusting remarks made by Mr. Sol. Smith on this season, the disastrous result of which no human foresight could have prevented, situated as I was at the time.

CHAPTER L.

Closing Career of J. H. Caldwell—St. Louis Season of 1840—Stars—Mr. John Sinclair—Mme. La Compte—Chas. Eaton—Mr. and Mrs. Barnes—G. H. Barrett—A. A. Adams—Dan Marble—Llewellyn—E. S. Conner—Biography of Mr. Sinclair—A New Theatre in New Orleans—An Equestrian and Dramatic Company—J. Robinson, Equestrian Director—Levi North—Two Stones—Don Ricardo—Young Hernandez—Ring Performances in the St. Louis Theatre—Biography of H. L. Bateman—Bateman Children—Mrs. W. H. Smith—Old Joe Cowell—Prices of Admission lowered.

IN the early months of 1840, Mr. James H. Caldwell comes to the front again, showing that he still held the spirit of *crushing* that he threatened me with in 1824. We had just been burnt out twice in Mobile within a few months, and had then but a poor apology for a theatre, and he doubtless thought it a good time to give me a death-blow. Mr. Caldwell tried to obtain subscribers to his project of building a new theatre in Mobile, but from some cause or another it did not seem to him in with the views of the citizens, and he got but few, if any, subscribers. Having started the idea of a new house, he did not like to give it up, and so concluded to build it from his own means. This building was erected at the corner of Royal and St. Michael Streets, three squares nearer the centre of the city than the temporary one put up by me after the great fire of the previous year. This house was a regular sinking-fund. He tried it under his own control, then rented to others, and after years of failures, was glad to obtain lessees in the firm of Ludlow & Smith. This was another instance wherein Mr. Caldwell, carrying out his *crushing* system, injured himself. Mr. James H. Caldwell was a man whose acts have had extensive influence on the progress of the Drama in the West. I do not wish to decry his merits, and although I am willing to concede his great energy and applaud his enterprise, I cannot credit him with all the honors, if there be any, for what has been done for the Drama in the great valley of the Mississippi.

As I have had occasion to use Mr. Caldwell's name frequently in the progress of this work, and may do so often again, perhaps it would be as well for me to introduce here a brief sketch of this gentleman's life. Mr. Joseph N. Ireland, in his

book entitled, "Records of the New York Stage" (vol. 1, page 587), thus speaks of James H. Caldwell, manager and actor: "September 2, 1828, Mr. Caldwell appeared at the Park Theatre, New York, as *Belcour*, in the 'West Indian,' and the *Three Singles*, in "Three and the Deuce.'" He says Mr. Caldwell was born in England, in 1793, and first appeared, while yet a child, at the Manchester Theatre. He was brought to America by Mr. Holman, and first appeared in the United States at Charleston, South Carolina, as *Belcour* and the *Three Singles*. In 1817 he managed a theatre in Washington, D. C. In 1818 he built the theatre at Petersburg, Virginia. He abandoned his interest in the cause of the Drama, and retired from the profession January 14, 1843, making his farewell bow as *Vapid*, in the "Dramatist." He afterwards occupied important public stations in New Orleans, where he long continued his residence, his untiring industry having secured him a very handsome fortune. Mr. Caldwell was twice married: first to Mrs. Wormley, of Fredericksburg, Virginia; and secondly to Miss Rowe, daughter of George T. Rowe, actor and theatrical prompter. Mr. Caldwell died during the war, while temporarily residing in New York, September 11, 1863, at the age of seventy-three. His remains were taken to New Orleans in the November following his death, and deposited in his own vault.

Our spring season in St. Louis of 1840 commenced March 25th. The leading members of the stock company this season were Mr. and Mrs. George P. Farren, Mr. Thomas Placide, Mrs. W. H. Smith (a sister of Mrs. J. M. Field), Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Cowell, Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Bateman; others, names not remembered. The persons who appeared as "stars" were Mr. E. S. Conner, Mr. Llewellen with his horse, Madame La Compte, Mr. C. Eaton, Mr. Sinclair, the cultivated English vocalist; Mr., Mrs., and Miss Barnes; Mr. George H. Barrett, Mr. A. A. Adams, and Dan Marble. Of the above "stars," the following were the most successful: Madame La Compte, Mr. Sinclair, Dan Marble, and Llewellen; the others drew but moderately. Mr. Sinclair was for many years a highly popular vocalist on all the principal stages of Great Britain and America. I presume my readers would like to learn more of him.

John Sinclair (the father of Mrs. Edwin Forrest) was born (according to Ireland) in Edinburgh, in the year 1790, and early displaying a taste for music, was furnished with every facility for its cultivation which that metropolis could bestow. In 1811 he went to London, as a pupil of

T. Walsh, and in 1812 made his *début* as *Carlos*, in the "Duenna," with the most flattering applause. He remained there, enjoying the highest esteem as a ballad-singer, for nearly seven years. He then went to France and Italy, where he studied with Bandarali, Pelligrine, Cecherina, and received the advantage of Rossini's advice and assistance. He reappeared at Covent Garden, November 19, 1823, receiving a most enthusiastic welcome. But his popularity soon declined; he had lost the simplicity of his earlier style, without acquiring the power and brilliancy of the Italian school; and those who had formerly delighted in his manly rendering of their national ballads, were now annoyed by his incessant introduction of elaborate embellishment. Mr. Sinclair made his first appearance in America in New York, September 24, 1831, at the Park Theatre, as *Prince Orlando*, in the "Cabinet." The New York audience was at first rather disappointed with Mr. Sinclair, nor was it until his performance of "Masanielle" that he established himself as a general favorite. His voice was a tenor of unusual sweetness, but he frequently lacked expression, feeling, and taste. Mr. Sinclair reappeared in New York for several seasons, and we last remember him at the new Chatham Theatre in 1842. He returned to England, and died there September 22, 1857, aged, according to the newspapers of the time, seventy-five years, but according to the memoir from which we have gathered the above particulars, sixty-seven years. In my opinion, the newspapers were nearest the truth. When Mr. Sinclair performed in my theatre at St. Louis, in either 1840 or 1841, he appeared to me a man of at least sixty years of age. His voice was husky and some notes cracked, and voice and face indicated a man of sixty years of age. Notwithstanding, his Scotch ballads and other songs were still delightful.

When Mr. Smith had concluded the *after-season* for the purpose of obliging his old friend Jack Barnes, he remained in Mobile about a week, to attend to some other business, and during that time he learned that Mr. Caldwell had issued proposals for the erection of a new theatre, in accordance with a threat made by him to my partner in the early portion of the winter of 1839. As soon as Mr. Smith assured himself of Mr. Caldwell's proceedings, he wrote to me at St. Louis that he should go at once to New Orleans, and if it were possible to effect his purpose, I must not be surprised to hear that he had made arrangements for a theatre for us to perform in, the following fall, in that city, desiring me at the same time to write my views to him without delay. This I did promptly,

approving of the resolution he had formed ; and I thought it but fair to give Mr. Caldwell a Roland for his Oliver. Communication in those days was tediously slow, and before my partner got my letter he had written another to me, stating that he had made arrangements with a party there to build a theatre for us, and to have it ready for the 1st of November ensuing. This party was Messrs. Dubois & Kendig, well known in New Orleans as the keepers of a large livery establishment. They had begun and raised a portion of the foundation for a large livery-stable, but were induced to change their plan and build a theatre, and give us a lease on it for five years, in consideration of our paying ten thousand dollars per annum as rent for it. Mr. Smith stated in this letter that he had taken a lease for this contemplated theatre in his individual name, and that if I did not like the arrangement he would take the speculation himself, and take the management of the theatre. To this letter I replied immediately, that as I presumed he had in good faith taken it for the firm, I should not back out of it, but would stand my chances of profit or loss ; but stated at the same time that I thought the rent high for the kind of building they were to put up, and the rate of theatre rent in those days.

Mr. Smith, in his book, published just before his death, speaking of his taking the Poydras Street Theatre, New Orleans, in 1839, says at page 154 : “ I took it in my individual name, not feeling that I had a right to involve my partner in the speculation, he being 1,200 miles away, [he might have said, attending to the business of the firm in St. Louis] but reserving for him the right to become a joint lessee with me if he should elect to do so ; thus making what I call something of a Christian return for his conduct in regard to the Mobile theatre in the fall of 1834, when he leased that house *on his own account*, excluding me from a participation in the business of that season, in violation of an understanding that we were to join our forces and become joint managers.”

Mr. Smith speaks of this transaction as a parallel case to that of 1834, when I took the Mobile theatre in my own name. Our situations were far from being the same. In 1839, when Mr. Smith took a lease for five years, *in his own name*, on the Poydras Street Theatre, New Orleans, we were *actual* partners, and had been and expected to be for many years.

In 1834, when I rented for *one year*, in my own name, the Mobile theatre, we were *not* partners ; a final adjustment of the proposed partnership not having been arrived at, in consequence of Mr. Smith's failure to meet me at the time

appointed by us mutually, and intended for the very purpose of settling the conditions of the partnership, should such be the conclusion. We had both discovered that there were matters of importance to be adjusted in order to secure harmony in our business, and which could not be done by letter so clearly and as satisfactorily as they could at a personal meeting.

When Mr. Smith took the American Theatre, New Orleans, in his own name, and then offered me a half-interest in it, if he had no time to consult me, he certainly behaved very properly; but did no more than what the situation demanded of him, and any other course would have been unjust, situated as we were at the time,—*actual partners* then and before that time. He went to New Orleans for the express purpose of procuring a theatre for the firm of *Ludlow & Smith*, and, should it prove necessary, to even build one. He knew—he was lawyer enough for that—that any attempt on his part to retain the theatre for his own individual purposes would have been a breach of our partnership contract, and would make him liable in law on an action for damages. There was no parallel in the two situations.

As soon as my partner assured me that he had arranged conditions on which a theatre would be built for us in New Orleans, I wrote and pressed upon him arguments that I had often before presented, for our combining dramatic and equestrian performances under the same roof. This for years had been a favorite scheme with me, provided it could be done in a style superior to any I had yet seen in the United States. The building must be a regular dramatic theatre, with elegant and appropriate requisites, and without any of the sawdust attendants that present themselves in circuses. All must be neat, elegant, and orderly. My partner immediately came into my views of the matter, and the building was erected in accordance with those views.

While the building was being erected under the supervision of my partner, I commenced my work of engaging the best and most popular equestrians of the day. The first and greatest consideration with me was to secure an intelligent equestrian director, for neither my partner nor myself were capable of taking charge of this department of our scheme. This important officer was found in the person of Mr. John Robinson, one of the most energetic, skilful, and reliable men I ever met with in his profession. I am happy to have it in my power to record here that this gentleman—now known as “old John Robinson”—has by his intelligence, honesty,

and activity acquired a fortune, which he fairly deserves, and I hope will long enjoy. Among the celebrities in this department were engaged Levi North and his famous horse, the brothers Stone, the two Lipmans, Don Ricardo (as clown), well known years after as an active business man in and about the courts of law in the city of New Orleans. There was another clever young man, who acted as clown, named Eldridge; and though last, not least, except in the size of his body, was "little Jimmy." This was a foster-son of John Robinson's, one of the greatest little boys for natural intelligence, activity, and courage that ever came within my observation. He was about eight years of age when he came to us, but did not appear to be over six years of age; well formed, with an intelligent look, and flowing ringlets of hair. He became a great pet with the ladies in New Orleans. He was a fearless rider, and always graceful. This child was rechristened before going to New Orleans, and I was the officiating priest; although the honor, if it be one, is claimed by my partner in his book. "Little Jimmy" was not dignified enough for "his excellency," and so I named him "Master Hernandez," without the "Juan" that Mr. Smith has tacked on his name. When this child grew to manhood, he became one of the greatest celebrities as a bold and graceful rider.

Our next important step in this direction was to secure as perfect an equestrian menage as possible. In this we succeeded beyond our expectations. Mr. North, as I have before said, brought with him his splendid animal; Mr. Eaton Stone also brought a fine horse; and Mr. Robinson was able to secure two or three trained horses from a broken-up circus manager, and to these added some untrained fancy horses, which, with his excellent skill in training, he soon made very useful and ornamental. Two of these animals, marked with glossy black spots on a smooth, fine white coat of hair, he christened "Ludlow and Smith." He used these horses when he performed his feat of riding and managing two in the same act or same ride.

After having secured "the horse and his rider," we went to work to have them well caparisoned; and with this view before us, set tailors and seamstresses to work to make entire new trappings for the horses, and new and elegant dresses for the riders. Our "grand entries" were grand indeed.

Our spring season in St. Louis, of 1840, closed on the 4th of July, and the fall season opened on the 1st of September. During this interval, we set carpenters to work on the parquet

or pit of this theatre; removed the seats, and made a clear area or circle for ring equestrian performances. This was done more with a view of getting our untrained horses and a few unpractised riders into good and systematic condition than from any expectations of much profit. Now, I wish the reader to observe that all this expense was incurred and paid for as it progressed, and after what Mr. Smith tries, in his book, to make appear a ruinous season, just concluded in Mobile, that took \$12,000 of the following New Orleans profits to pay off. And this was done, too, without the firm borrowing a dollar of money; and, in addition to the above expenses, paying some back debts due the company; and the St. Louis season yielding us but little over its actual expenses. Pah! Humbug! "A weak invention of the enemy." Mr. Smith's desire was to make it appear that I had committed a most egregious blunder in the erection of the State Street Theatre, Mobile.

Our fall season opened with drama on the stage, and equestrian performances in the circle instead of a farce. But alas! the horses did not draw this time. The fact was we were not complete in our equestrian department. Some of our best riders—North, the Stones, and Lipmans—had not joined us yet, and did not until we reached New Orleans. Robinson and his little boy, Jimmy, were favorites, but the rest were unpractised and unskilful.

At the conclusion of our spring season, Mr. and Mrs. Bateman left our company and went East. Mrs. W. H. Smith also left, and went to Philadelphia. As I shall have no occasion to speak of these persons again, I will add here a short sketch of their theatrical career.

H. L. Bateman. The first portion of this gentleman's name, among his acquaintances, was supposed to be Henry, but really it was Hezekiah, and I never heard that he corrected any one in their mistake. Why he did not, I never learned; probably because he thought Henry sounded better than Hezekiah. Mr. Bateman was born in Baltimore, Maryland, early in the year 1816. At what time he commenced his theatrical career I do not precisely know, but he joined the company of Ludlow & Smith in St. Louis in the summer of 1838, and was with them until the end of the summer season of 1840. In the fall of 1839, he married Miss Sidney Cowell, daughter of Joseph Cowell, Sr. Miss Cowell, with her father and mother were members of the company of Ludlow & Smith at the time of her marriage. About 1850, Mr. Bateman commenced travelling with his two children, Kate and Ellen,

and performing in different theatres of the United States. They were considered remarkably clever children, especially the younger one, Ellen, who when only eight years of age used to perform *Crack*, in the "Turnpike Gate," in imitation of her grandfather's acting of it; and an excellent imitation it was. When this young miss grew to womanhood, she married some gentleman not an actor, and withdrew from the stage. The other daughter, Kate, now Mrs. Crow (no relation to Jim Crow), was a popular actress in England in 1877. Mr. Bateman managed several theatres during his day, and at one time the Pine Street Theatre, St. Louis. He was amongst the first — perhaps *the* first — to bring to the United States the French opera bouffe, which was at first tolerably successful; but it soon became distasteful to the American people, and afterwards failed to attract any persons of delicacy and refinement. Mr. Bateman then returned to England, where he became embroiled in difficulties with managers and actors, and died in London, March 22, 1875, aged fifty-nine years.

Mrs. W. H. Smith is spoken of in a preceding portion of this book, under her maiden name of Sarah Riddle, member of my company in 1824.

Sarah Riddle was born in Philadelphia, in the year 1808, and made her first appearance in that city in *Charles* (a child three or four years of age), in "Laugh when You Can." Mr. Ireland says this occurred in 1823, at the Walnut Street Theatre, but Mr. Ireland's book certainly records an error with regard to the date of this first appearance, as Sarah Riddle would then have been entirely too large for the character. In the very next year, 1824, Miss Riddle, her mother, sister, and brother William were members of my company at Nashville and Mobile. Miss R. was then a young woman of sixteen or seventeen years of age, and played *Emily* (the young lady), in "Laugh when You Can," to my *George Gossamer* in that play; remaining in my company until the spring of 1825, when the mother and daughter returned to Philadelphia, their former residence. On September 13, 1825, Miss Sarah Riddle made her first appearance in New York at the Chatham Garden Theatre, then under the management of Mr. Barriere, as *Emily Worthington*, in the "Poor Gentleman," and was well received. During the engagement she appeared with success as *Rosalie Somers*, in "Town and Country;" *Paul*, in "Wandering Boys;" *Virginia*, in "Virginus;" and for her benefit, on the 28th of October, *Cora*, in "Pizarro," and *Little Pickle*, in the farce of the "Spoiled Child."

After performing in Philadelphia and Boston for many years, and in the West, she appeared again in New York, as Mrs. W. H. Smith, and ranked with the first favorites of the day, particularly in comedy of every grade. She appeared at Laura Keene's Theatre, and at Barton's, in 1857-8, in the line of middle-aged, fashionable dowagers, country women, and Abigails of all degrees, with credit to herself and satisfaction to the public. In 1859-60, she played in New York at the Winter Garden Theatre. She took her farewell of the stage at the "Howard Atheneum," Boston, February, 1861, and died in that city a few months after, of a lingering and painful illness, aged about fifty-three years. Her daughter was afterwards known on the stage as Mrs. Sedley Brown; and in 1874, as Mrs. Sol. Smith, Jr.

As we were about to increase our expenses largely by the employment of an equestrian troop, we thought it prudent to get rid of some of our heaviest salaries among the dramatic portion of the company. Those of our company who left at the end of this season were Mr. Thomas Placide, Mrs. W. H. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Bateman, and Mr. and Mrs. Cowell. Before finally parting with Joe Cowell, I would like to record an anecdote or two of him, in relation to occurrences that took place at the commencement and at the close of this season of St. Louis; it is illustrative of the character of this old joker. Old Joe Cowell was an envious man, who looked on the actions of his fellow-men with an eye of sarcasm, and was ready at all times to pick a flaw in and to turn to ridicule their best efforts. Like *Wormwood*, in the farce of the "Lottery Ticket," he delighted in annoying people by saying unpleasant things to them, or in their hearing; and this he would do in such a way that they would be at a loss whether to laugh at it as an accidental criticism, or to be angry with him for an intentional effort to offend. An affair somewhat of this character once transpired on a Mississippi steamer, when I was a *compagnon de voyage* with him. One day at dinner, Cowell, always careful for his stomach, had sent for an additional supply of chicken, when, after a few minutes of delay, the attendant returned and reported none to be had,— "chicken all gone!" Cowell instantly rose from the table, evidently vexed. A short time after, while we were seated on the "guards" of the boat, the captain came along and stopped to converse with us. In a few minutes a dead chicken was thrown overboard, from the "hurricane deck," above us, when Cowell suddenly remarked, "There, Captain, goes one of your chickens overboard." The captain carelessly replied,

"O, that's only a dead one." Cowell replied instantly, "What a pity it is you didn't kill it this morning; we then should have had two chickens for dinner." The captain looked serious, and stared at him, apparently not knowing how to take it; which Cowell observing, said, with one of his blandest smiles, "Do you take snuff?" at the same time presenting his box. The captain, thrusting his hands into his pockets, said, "No, sir; I never take pinches," and walked away. There was somewhat of the "Janus" about "old Joe." By-the-by, this soubriquet was conferred upon him by his acquaintance, to distinguish him from his son Joseph, a very clever scenic artist, long since dead. You could never tell by his manner of intercourse whether old Joe Cowell liked or disliked you. In his address he was always the same smiling, facetious gentleman; he could "smile, and smile, and murder while he smiled."

My "old times" friend, George Percy Farren, long since departed, used to tell a joke on Cowell, and I remember his relating it in the presence of Cowell, something after this fashion. Cowell and Farren on a certain day had been to the races. There had been some fine horses on the track, and the betting had been pretty high. Cowell had been considerably excited, and imbibed a few glasses of "fire-water" more than was his "constant custom of an afternoon." The two dressed in the same room at the theatre, and while preparing for the stage, the following dialogue took place: Cowell—"I say, George, how are you off for words? I'll be cursed if I know a bloody word of this part (referring to the character he was about to represent). I have two or three scenes with you; you must help me through with them." "All right, my boy," says Farren. "But I say, George, who plays this old woman?" Farren replies, "Mrs. R." Cowell—O! d—n her old soul. She'll require every cue" (meaning the antecedent few words to each of her speeches). Then, after a minute, recollecting that Mrs. R. was Farren's mother-in-law, he says, with one of his gracious smiles, "Yet, after all, George, she's a good old soul, ain't she." Farren was wont to bring this up in the green-room, when he wished to raise a laugh at Cowell's expense.

The fall season of 1840 in St. Louis closed about the end of October, having finished with very little profit to the management. The money crisis which had commenced in the Eastern States a year or two before had now reached the West, and the people, becoming alarmed and panic-stricken, had been drawing tight their purse-strings. During the spring

season of this year in St. Louis, we had thought it our best policy to lower the admission to the first places in the house from one dollar to seventy-five cents. But the citizens of St. Louis were anxious and uncertain about the future, and not in the humor, generally, for amusements. The season concluded with the company, generally, taking "benefits," many of them proving to be no benefits at all; but they lost nothing, for the management did not require them to pay up any sum that they might fall short in, of the expenses of the night. Mrs. Farren had a very fine benefit; Mr. Thomas Placide, Mrs. W. H. Smith, Mrs. Cowell, Mr. and Mrs. Bateman, Mr. Ludlow, and Mr. Smith, that spoke well for the consideration and respect entertained for them by the St. Louis public. About the last of October, the cavalcade, horse, foot, and dragoons, embarked on a steamboat for New Orleans, and arrived there in good condition in about a week's time.

CHAPTER LI.

First Season in the American Theatre, New Orleans—Dramatic and Equestrian Performances—"Schinderella," by M. C. Field—Biography of M. C. Field—First Engagement of Mrs. F. Fitzwilliam—Fanny Elisler—At the St. Charles—Competition between the two Fannies—Biography of Fanny Ellisler—Mrs. Fitzwilliam at the "Swamp" Theatre, Mobile—J. B. Buckstone—Biography of Mrs Fitzwilliam—Biography of J. B. Buckstone—Fogg and Stickney's Company Engaged—E. S. Conner—Biography of Mr. and Mrs. Conner—Biography of Mr. Ranger—Tyrone Power at the St. Charles Theatre—List of Company of the American Theatre, 1840-41—St. Louis Season, 1841—James Thorne—Miss Petrie—Equestrian Performances—Mr. Hackett—Mrs. Fitzwilliam and Mr. Buckstone—Vacation—Prices of Admission lowered.

ON my arrival in New Orleans, I found our new theatre in a condition that would allow us to commence our season, although not completed, especially in the appointments for the stage. There were only about a half a dozen scenes painted, with their necessary wings, borders, etc. These had been painted by our scenic artist, Mr. John R. Smith, who, with his assistants, had also painted the auditorium. All was light, airy, and beautiful; the circle was in the form of a horse-shoe, the parquet large, with three tiers or circles above; the whole capable of accommodating about twelve hundred persons. The prices of admission were: Parquet and first tier of boxes, one dollar; second tier, seventy-five cents; third tier, fifty cents; children half-price. The building fronted on Poydras Street, the west side on St. Francis Street, while the rear reached the street that intervened between it and Lafayette Square. In order to avoid any offensive odor, our horses were provided for in a livery-stable a square removed, and brought to the theatre a short time before required, where accommodations were provided on one side of the stage on St. Francis Street. When the horses were wanted for ring performances on any night, or for practising during the day, the seats and floor of the parquet were removed, and this was done in ten minutes, when the ring was ready for the night. It was our custom, except in cases of certain "stars," to perform a comedy, or two farces, in the first part of the evening, and conclude with equestrian performances in the ring; and these always sent the people away in good humor.

The new American Theatre, Poydras Street, New Orleans, was opened to the public November 10, 1840, with a good play and farce, and performed, with great applause, to an audience of over one thousand persons; the receipts in cash being a small sum short of one thousand dollars. The audience seemed delighted with the company and the theatre; every thing was new, joyous, and inspiring. At the end of the performance, the managers were called before the curtain by the audience; the senior one returned his acknowledgments for the warm manner with which his old friends had greeted him on his return to them, and the junior one thanked them for the satisfaction with which the public appeared to view his efforts in an endeavor to provide for their comfort and pleasure, and concluded with promises of better things that were to come. I doubt if ever an audience went out of a theatre more pleased with what they had seen and heard.

On the 19th of November we introduced the horses for the first time. The house was well filled, but did not count up in dollars quite equal to the first night. But the audience appeared equally delighted with the equestrian performances as with the dramatic. The horses were splendid in their trappings, and the young men who rode them were elegant, graceful, and skilful. But the great *hit* of the night was "Master Hernandez;" not satisfied with applauding him most rapturously, he was at the end of his riding requested to walk his horse around the circle, and in doing so he was loaded with bouquets, handed him by the ladies from the dress-circle.

On the fourth week of our season we produced the melodramatic spectacle of "Timour, the Tartar," and introduced our horses upon the stage. The play was strongly cast, *Timour* being performed by Mr. Charles Webb, and *Zorilda* by Mrs. Farren; *Kerim* and *Sanballat*, two knights, Mr. Ben DeBar and Mr. Eaton Stone, with javelins performed a fight on horseback, such as I have never witnessed for earnestness and effect by any persons performing those two characters. The scenery was all new and appropriate, and the dresses new and dazzling. The drama was well received, and performed several nights to well-filled houses. Following this was performed the melodramas of "El Hyder," "Cataract of the Ganges," "Forty Thieves," and "Mazeppa." In the latter piece Mr. DeBar distinguished himself by enacting *Mazeppa*, and, lashed to the back of a horse, doing the runs of the perilous flight of the wild horse, and not calling for an equestrian as a substitute to do the ride for him, as is usually the case. Some persons who may have lately seen this fat, jolly old

actor perform *Falstaff*, and without much need of stuffing, may feel disposed to doubt that he ever enacted such feats as I have described; but they are facts nevertheless. Alas! poor old Ben! He has just made his last exit, and that from this bustling world — 1877.

About the close of this year (1840), Mr. P. T. Barnum, now known as the “great showman,” made his appearance in New Orleans, having very recently commenced his career as a public man. He had in his employ a lad of about sixteen years of age, whom he called “Master Dimond,” and who, with blackened face and hands, performed negro dances, to the no small delight of many who admired such exhibitions of suppleness. He could twist his feet and legs, while dancing, into more fantastic forms than I ever witnessed before or since in any human being.

Mr. Barnum waited on us with his boy, and proposed that we should engage him to dance for a few nights between the plays and farces, saying, as an inducement, that he would draw a gallery audience for us, and would not be displeasing to other portions of the house. As his demand for the services of the boy was modest — don’t start, reader! yes, *modest*; Barnum’s demands in those days *were* modest; he was not the “great showman” then; — well, as I said, his demand being modest, we engaged the boy for five or six nights, without ever seeing him dance, and the result was just what Mr. Barnum said it would be. This was Mr. Barnum’s first start on his long road as a “great showman.”

About the beginning of 1841, we produced, for the first time on any stage, a burletta, or perhaps it might be more properly called a caricature of “Cinderella,” and which was entitled “Schinderella, or The Little Dutch Sleeper.” This piece was written by Mr. Matthew C. Field, formerly of our company, but then a writer for the New Orleans *Picayune*, a popular daily paper. The songs were adapted to the original music of the opera of “Cinderella.” The scenery was painted expressly for the piece, and represented several local points in and adjacent to the city. Miss Eliza Petrie was the *Schinderella* of the piece, and Mr. DeBar, *Doctor Silliman*, *Magician*, and *Prince of Sarsaparilla*. This character was drawn from real life, in the person of a notorious vender of a patent medicine known as Stillman’s Extract of Sarsaparilla. What made this character highly amusing to the citizens of New Orleans was the fact that Mr. DeBar, purposely getting acquainted with Dr. Stillman, contrived to borrow of him a suit of clothes usually worn by the doctor in his daily walks

about the city, and which was very eccentric, or rather in the extreme of fashion. The first scene of this little dramatic sketch was a peculiar one, and was intended to represent rather an exaggeration of the low, marshy ground that then bordered the city of New Orleans on the lake side ; but which has since been drained, redeemed, and built upon. This representation occupied about one-half the depth on the stage, and presented clumps of small growth of rushes, palmettos, water-lilies, and high grass. The front of this swamp, or what is called professionally the ground-piece, was represented by a close row of large bottles, legibly labelled "Sarsaparilla." In order to understand the burlesque intended by this scene, it may be well enough, for the benefit of the uninitiated, to say that the first scene of the opera of *Cinderella* generally presents a beautiful, glassy lake, in which are seen golden, silvered, and red fishes swimming, and white swans sailing on the surface. In the opera, the *Prince* enters as the curtain rises, and sings the beautiful aria of "All Around is Silence," being descriptive of the scene before him. Instead of beautiful fish and swans, seen in "*Cinderella*" sporting in the water, here were seen snakes creeping up the dwarfed palmettos and bushes, bull-frogs jumping from the land into the water, and eels and craw-fish creeping out of the mouths of the Sarsaparilla bottles ; and finally a large alligator appeared above the water, crawled to the shore, and with his eyes glared at the *Prince* while he sang of the beauties of the scene. Now, whether Dr. Stillman considered the piece a good advertisement of his Sarsaparilla, or was not aware of the ridicule contained in it, I am not able to say ; but every night that the piece was performed he was among the auditors, and seemed to enjoy it as much as any of them.

In February, 1841, my eldest daughter, Cornelia Burke Ludlow, who never followed the profession of the stage, was married at my family residence, in the suburbs of the city of Mobile, to Matthew C. Field, formerly an actor in our company from the summer of 1835 to that of 1838, when he left to make a journey into Southern Mexico for the improvement of his health. In the fall of 1839, Mr. Field became an assistant editor of that popular daily paper, the New Orleans *Picayune*, where his various contributions, under the signature of "Phazma," attracted considerable attention, especially his "Prairie Sketches." Mr. Field had a vein of poetry in his composition, and wrote some beautiful little poems, possessing originality of thought, sensibility, and refinement. In 1843, Mr. Field made another journey westward in search of health,

being one of the party of Sir William Stuart, that left St. Louis about the 1st of June, 1843, for the Rocky Mountains; he returned in the fall, and resumed his duties in the office of the *Picayune*. In the spring of 1844, in connection with his brother, Joseph M. Field, and Mr. Charles Keemle, of St. Louis, he started a daily paper in that city, entitled the St. Louis *Reveille*, which was highly successful while the subject of this sketch was its leading editor; but disease soon prostrated him, and early destroyed one of the bright intellects of the day.

Mr. Matthew C. Field was born in England, of Irish parents, who removed to America with their family when he was only five or six years of age. When about fifteen years of age, he was placed with a jeweller in the city of New York to learn that business; but he preferred ornaments of the mind rather than ornaments of the body, and had a passion for the gems of Shakespeare much stronger than for those of India. His brother, Joseph M., having stepped upon the stage with some promise of success, he was induced to try it; but finding it, soon, a rough road to travel, he very wisely resolved to stop, and did so ere the Circe had time to entirely absorb his rational faculties, and commenced writing down his own thoughts rather than reciting those of others. Close application to his office duties made rapid inroads upon a constitution never very robust, and in September, 1844, Mr. Field left his family and home for Boston, there to embark for a sea voyage. On reaching Boston, and while waiting for a vessel on which to sail on his intended voyage, his disease assumed the most alarming symptoms, and his friends advised him to abandon his intentions and return to his family. This advice with reluctance he yielded to, and took passage on a vessel for Mobile, to which point his wife and children had removed to the house of the writer. When about half-way on his voyage, Mr. Field died, being only thirty-one years of age, leaving two children, daughters, who were reared and educated by this writer, their grandfather. They are both living at this time, and are mothers of families. The vessel having to perform the remainder of the voyage in a warm climate, and without means of preserving the body of M. C. Field, it was buried in the ocean.

Early in the year 1841, Mrs. Fitzwilliam, an English actress, who had been performing in the Eastern theatres, made her first visit to New Orleans. The first intimation we had of the lady being in the city was contained in a note addressed by her to our firm, requesting an interview. I immediately waited

on her, and learned that she had come to New Orleans under an engagement to perform at the St. Charles Theatre, then under the control of Mr. James H. Caldwell, but a misunderstanding had arisen between them, and it was not likely that she would perform there; in such case, she wished to know whether we could offer any nights at our theatre. I told her that we had arranged our plans for that season with an intention of not employing any "stars," but rather to trust to the novelty of our performances, and the attractions of a new theatre and a good stock company. Finally, however, I said that when she had determined whether she would perform at the St. Charles or not, and if the result should be the latter, and she would inform me of it, I would wait upon her again. The next day I received a note from her that she positively should not appear at the St. Charles Theatre; so I called again upon her, and in a very short time engaged her for two weeks, with the understanding that if it proved satisfactory to both parties, it was to be extended to two more weeks. Her conditions were one-half of the entire receipts each night, benefits inclusive. The two weeks did prove satisfactory to both parties, and was one among the highly successful engagements made during our long career as managers. This lady, by her inimitable acting, filled the theatre almost every night to its utmost capacity, for two weeks, and her engagement was then extended to two more weeks on the same terms.

About the time that Mrs. Fitzwilliam concluded her first two weeks' engagement, the celebrated French danseuse, Fanny Ellsler, arrived in New Orleans, under an engagement at the St. Charles Theatre for two weeks, at \$1,000 for every night that she danced. She was the best artist in her line in America, and filled that large theatre to its utmost capacity for the first four or five nights, and then the *furor* began to subside, and continued to diminish gradually. It was a profitable engagement for Ellsler, but I doubt if the manager, Mr. Caldwell, made much.

The attraction of Ellsler at the St. Charles did not injure us at the American, and for the following reason: We had understood from Mrs. Fitzwilliam that she had a play well suited to the condition then existing between the two rival theatres; it was a play entitled "Foreign Airs and Native Graces." In the performance of this play Mrs. F. represented several characters, among them a French danseuse, and in this character she gave imitations of Fanny Ellsler in her different dances, and not bad resemblances either; a little extravagant, perhaps, but far from contemptible. We so ar-

rangé the time of commencing this play that it should begin about the time that Ellsler concluded her dancing each night, and at this time hundreds of persons came to our theatre, which was less than half a block from the St. Charles, in order to enjoy Fanny Fitzwilliam's imitation of the great danseuse. On Ellsler's first night, there were hundreds of people who could not get into the St. Charles, and the overflow there helped to fill our house. This gave many persons an early opportunity of knowing what a splendid dancer Mrs. Fitzwilliam was, as well as an incomparable actress, of good taste and refined feeling. There was a short piece I remember to have seen her perform in, but I cannot now recollect the name of it,—I think it was entitled "*Widow Wiggins*,"—in which she enacted three or four characters in an inimitable manner; one of the characters was, if I remember right, a female street-singer, who screamed out her ballads to a hand-organ accompaniment by herself, that used to convulse the house with laughter; and in ten minutes after, as a wandering Savoyard boy, she uttered her words with so much pathos and feeling that she filled the eyes of the same people with tears. Thus would this admirable artist sway the feelings of her audience as she willed. Her representations of Irish characters,—the *Widow Brady*, and others,—I am of opinion, have never been equalled by any lady on this continent. This lady's second engagement of two weeks was quite equal to the first.

As I shall not have occasion to speak of Miss Fanny Ellsler again in this book, and as she occupied a very prominent position on the stage of this country during the short time she was with us, it will probably be acceptable to the reader to have here a short sketch of her life:—

Fanny Ellsler was born in Vienna, Austria, in 1809; appeared first in New York, at the Park Theatre, May 14, 1840, being then about thirty-one years of age, yet having the appearance of not being over twenty-five. She was tall, and most exquisitely formed; her face was not very handsome, with broad German features, and not expressive. Her dancing was magnificent; she seemed to move in the air, without touching the stage. She first presented herself in the *pas* "*Cracovienna*;" then in "*La Tarentule*." Mr. Henry Wickoff, an American, was her man of business, making her engagements and attending to her money matters, but all under her own directions and close observation. She was a magnificent creature in form, but without a soul; or if she had one, it was cased in iron, and was never permitted to be brought into use. She was avaricious to an excess, and so exacting that, if she

could have had her will, she would have taken the entire receipts of every night's performance; as it was, she often took the "lion's share," leaving the managers little more than the bones of the carcass. Mr. William B. Wood, manager of the Philadelphia Theatre, under whose management she appeared in that city, has mentioned, in his "Recollections of the Stage," that the receipts of the eleven nights she danced during an engagement there amounted to \$10,869.25, while what he paid her and her assistants, with his ordinary expenses, amounted to \$11,776; thus causing him a net loss of \$906.75. She made her last appearance before the American public July, 1842; returned to her native country, married, relinquished her profession, and settled down into private life at Dresden. She was living not many years since, and known as Madame Von Barnim.

When Mrs. Fitzwilliam had concluded her four weeks' engagement with the American Theatre, New Orleans, it was decided by Ludlow & Smith — yes, by *Sol. Smith* — that it would be advisable to go to the expense of transferring a company to Mobile and back again, in order that they might make some money in that city by this lady's performances in the "Swamp Theatre," *a-w-a-a-a-y out in Orange Grove*. And this, too, when Mr. Caldwell had just opened but three months a new theatre, four blocks nearer the centre of the city! What temerity! And yet the lady *did* go, and she *did* play, and she *did* make money for herself and the managers. She performed two weeks, filling the "Swamp Theatre" every night except rainy ones, and even then the receipts were not small; showing that when the city had recovered from its previous year's shock, and attraction was presented to them, they would go to see it, even "a-w-a-a-a-y out to Orange Grove."

During the first week of Mrs. Fitzwilliam in Mobile, Mr. J. B. Buckstone passed through that city, *en route* for New Orleans, where he was engaged to perform at the St. Charles Street Theatre. He commenced there immediately on his arrival; but owing to the strain on the public in the way of amusements during the engagement of the two Fannys, Mr. Buckstone's success at the St. Charles was not what it would have been under other circumstances.

Having concluded her engagement in Mobile, Mrs. Fitzwilliam returned to New Orleans, and Mr. Buckstone having made his a very short engagement at the St. Charles, these two were engaged by Ludlow & Smith to perform, for ten nights, such pieces as they had frequently appeared in together on the London stages. It was really a treat to see these two

artists perform. They had so frequently acted together, and understood each other so well, that they mingled pleasantly their comic touches of humor and facial expression, producing a combination that quite charmed their hearers, and rendered them insensible to every thing but the exquisite acting before them. This engagement of these two admirable artists was reasonably remunerative to both parties. Before taking leave of Mrs. Fitzwilliam, I will add a short sketch of her life:—

Mrs. Fanny Fitzwilliam was born in the year 1802, in a house attached to the Dover Theatre, England, of which her father was manager. Her maiden name was Copeland. She may be said to have grown up on the stage, appearing there when she was only two years of age, as one of the children in "The Stranger." At the age of five she played *Tom Thumb*, and sang all the music, in a style said to have astonished every one who heard her. At ten years of age she was removed from the theatre and placed with music-teachers, to acquire a knowledge of music and singing. In consequence of the illness of an actress, she was required at short notice to appear in the part of *Norah*, in the "Poor Soldier," and acquitted herself so well that she was continued on the stage from that time. In 1816, she was sent to London to receive instruction from the celebrated vocalist, Mrs. Bland (formerly Miss Romanzini). She attracted the notice of the management of the Haymarket Theatre, by whom she was engaged, and appeared there in 1816, being then only fourteen years of age. From there she went to Drury Lane Theatre, and appeared there in 1821; about that time she became Mrs. Fitzwilliam. From thence she came to America. She made her first appearance in America at the Park Theatre, October 14, 1839, in *Peggy*, in the "Country Girl," and in a musical farce written by Buckstone expressly for her, entitled the "Widow Wiggins." The latter was a piece in which she personated a variety of characters. Her reception in New York was of the most gratifying character. She came to New Orleans in 1841. Her last appearance was at Niblo's, August 22, 1842. As late as 1852 she was a partner with Buckstone in the Haymarket Theatre, and its principal attraction. Her death occurred September 11, 1854, from general prostration after an attack of cholera. She left, it was said, a fortune of \$50,000.

The reader may perhaps desire to know somewhat in relation to the private life of Mr. John B. Buckstone. I submit the following account:—

John Baldwin Buckstone, actor and author, was born near London, in 1802, and made his first appearance on the stage at

a country town in England. He first appeared in America on the stage of the Park Theatre, New York, August, 1840, as *Peter Pinkey*, in his own comedy of "Single Life," but not very successfully; visited New Orleans and Mobile, and other Southern theatres, in company with Mrs. Fitzwilliam, in the seasons of 1840-41; shortly after returned to England, and became manager, associated with Mrs. Fitzwilliam, and after her death sole manager, of the Haymarket Theatre, London, and continued such until 1876, when, as I believe, he withdrew from the management. He is the author of over a hundred plays, many of which have been very successful. He died in London, October 31, 1879.

Late in February or early in March, 1841, a circus company arrived in New Orleans under the management of Messrs. Fogg & Stickney, the latter Mr. Samuel P. Stickney, who died in 1876 or 1877. This company raised its canvas in the lower *faubourg*, the inhabitants of which were mostly French and very fond of equestrian performances. This troupe certainly drew away a considerable number of our customers, and my partner, Mr. Smith, became alarmed at their evident attractive qualities. This alarm was increased when he learned that this troupe intended, when through with the lower *faubourg*, to visit the upper one, in which our theatre was situated. While under the influence of this alarm, Mr. Smith suggested to me that it would be good policy for us to arrange with Messrs. Fogg & Stickney to engage them and their whole troupe, and thus prevent what he supposed would otherwise be a strong opposition to us. Not being as much alarmed as he appeared to be, I strenuously opposed it when first mentioned, as too heavy an expense to be added to our already double company of dramatic and equestrian performers; but he was very urgent in pressing his views, and I finally yielded to them. Mr. Smith admits in his book that this was a great pecuniary loss to us, and a fatal blunder in managerial policy. Here I might say, and with more justice than he did when speaking of building the "Swamp Theatre" in Mobile, "Remember, reader, I had nothing to do with this." But the truth is we *both* had to do with *both* affairs, and *both* gave their consent to the measures. The only difference was that the building of the "Swamp Theatre" was a matter of necessity, but the Fogg & Stickney engagement was a mere matter of choice, and not of necessity. I do not believe that this second troupe of equestrians added \$500 to our receipts more than we should have had without them, for after the second night the houses averaged about the same that they did before this

troupe's appearance ; and this experiment of Mr. Smith's contriving cost us, as he says, \$9,000.

Mr. E. S. Conner arrived in New Orleans soon after the close of Mrs. Fitzwilliam's engagement, and I engaged him to perform a few nights. Equestrian performances had begun to be not much of an attraction, so I sent a troupe to perform under canvas in a distant part of the city, where the receipts about paid their expenses for the time they performed. During the interval of their absence, Mr. E. S. Conner commenced an engagement of two weeks, opening in Bulwer's "Lady of Lyons," that had about that time begun to attract much attention in the United States. Mr. Conner was a very fine-looking young man,—in person well-fitted for the character ; he was tall, well-proportioned, and in his assumption of the *Prince of Como* might have been reasonably supposed to have sprung from an aristocratic stock. Mrs. Farren was the *Pauline*, and I believe it was her first representation of the character, and she performed it well. The *Colonel Damas* of the night was Mr. George P. Farren, who represented the bluff old soldier in a very soldierly manner. The play altogether was well done, and was repeated to good houses. Mr. Conner's nights gave a very fair average of receipts, which paid him well and yielded the management a reasonable profit. I shall add here a short sketch of this gentleman's theatrical career.

Edmund S. Conner made his first appearance at the Bowery Theatre, April 19, 1833, as *Scamper*, in the "Promissory Note," but did not make a hit. In 1838, he was engaged at Wallack's Theatre for juvenile tragedy and serious comedy. He married Miss Charlotte Barnes, about the end of 1847, and went with her to California, where they were great favorites. His *Richelieu* was much admired by the Californians. He at one time managed a theatre in Philadelphia. He was born in that city, in 1809. Miss Barnes was his second wife. His first wife was with him in my company in 1829–30. In 1876 or 1877, Mr. Conner visited England ; whether professionally I am unable to say, or how long he remained.

I add to the above a few lines in relation to Mrs. Conner, who performed with us in the spring of 1840, as Miss Charlotte Barnes. Mrs. Conner (Charlotte Barnes), who first appeared in Boston, made her *début* in New York at the Park Theatre, as *Angela*, in the "Castle Spectre," March 29th, 1834 ; she was then in her sixteenth year (born in 1818, in New York). On account of her parents she was greatly applauded, more than for her talent. Her face was not what

is called a good stage face, at any time of her life. Her voice was unmusical and weak; she was near-sighted, and her eyes lacked expression. She wrote a tragedy, entitled "*Octavia Bragaldi*," in 1836, that was well received for a time, but soon disappeared from the play-bills. She died in New York, April, 1863, aged forty-five.

During this spring in New Orleans (1841), there was announced in the advertisements of the St. Charles Theatre a Mr. Ranger, as a "star," for a short engagement. Not having heard of an actor of that name, I had a desire to get a taste of his quality. He appeared that night in a modern comedy, the name of which I cannot now recollect; it was as new to me as was the actor himself. I had never heard of either before, nor have I seen either since. This gentleman acted with ease and self-possession, evincing an intimate acquaintance with the stage, and although there was a decided originality in his style, it was not impressive; there was a tameness, an insipidity about it that prevented any effect the actor may have intended to produce upon his audience. It was like a drawing done with milk, that required fire to bring out the subject and show what was intended. This gentleman, although born in America, had studied his profession in Great Britain, passing most of the time in the country theatres; his metropolitan experience had been quite limited. He was undoubtedly a man of education and culture, but, in my opinion, quite out of his element upon the stage.

I subjoin a sketch of his career, chiefly borrowed from Mr. Ireland's "*New York Stage*":—

Mr. W. Ranger was an American by birth, and, I believe, a native of New York, whose real name was Codwise. He made his first appearance in New York, at the Park Theatre, on the 27th of August, 1839, as the *Marquis St. Croix*, in an interesting drama called the "*Romantic Widow*," giving delight by this and a few other original dramas. "His style was entirely his own, and indicated at once the scholar, the artist, and the gentleman. He went to New Orleans in the spring of 1841, where he played a short engagement at the St. Charles Theatre, then under the management of Mr. James H. Caldwell, and returned to England during the summer of that year." Although certainly a very neat and gentlemanly actor, he lacked spirit and force sufficient to produce any decided effect, or afford much enjoyment to an audience. His long absence from this country has caused him to be nearly forgotten by those who had seen him in former years, when he appeared at Wallack's Theatre as *Sir Peter Teazle*, followed

by an exceedingly clever novelty in the character of *Lord Weatherby*, in "Vanity Cured."

Mr. Tyrone Power played an engagement at the St. Charles Theatre about the close of 1840 or beginning of 1841, which was highly successful; it was extended to twenty-five nights, to generally well-filled houses.

During the summer of 1841, James M. Scott and James Thorne fitted up an old building in Vicksburg, Mississippi, and another at Natchez, as theatres, and opened them with performances by a tolerably good stock company during the fall, winter, and spring; but the scheme did not pay them, and they abandoned it in the spring of 1842.

The following are the names of the members of our company at the American Theatre, Poydras Street, for the season of 1840-41: Messrs. Charles P. Webb, George P. Farren, Sankey, Ben DeBar, John Green, Maynard, N. M. Ludlow, Sol. Smith, Mrs. Farren, Mrs. Green; other names not recollected. Mr. C. H. Mueller, leader of the orchestra, and Mr. John R. Smith, scenic artist.

In 1840, the new theatre built by James H. Caldwell in Mobile was opened to the public, under the management of Mr. Caldwell *sub rosa*, Mr. E. De Vendel and Mr. Charles J. B. Fisher being the managers actively carrying on the business before the public; the latter acting as treasurer, the former nominally president of the Mobile Gas Company; old Joe Cowell officiating as stage-manager. This season was not prosperous.

The season of Ludlow & Smith in New Orleans, 1840-41, yielded them a net profit of \$20,000. The season ended on the 12th of April, and the company departed for St. Louis.

Our spring season in St. Louis for 1841 commenced on April 26th, with the comedy of "The Dramatist:" *Vapid* (the dramatist), N. M. Ludlow; *Lord Scratch*, Mr. G. P. Farren; *Floriville*, Richard Russell, Jr.; *Lady Waitfort*, Mrs. Russell; *Mariann*, Mrs. Farren; the evening concluding with the petit drama of the "Hunter of the Alps:" *Felix*, N. M. Ludlow. The second night introduced Mr. James Thorne and Miss Eliza Petrie,—both returning to us after a year's playing in Vicksburg and Natchez, Mississippi,—the performance being "Guy Mannering:" *Dominie Sampson*, N. M. Ludlow; *Dandie Dinmont*, Ben DeBar; *Dirk Hatteraick*, Mr. Farren; *Gabriel*, Mr. Thorne, in which he sang those grand bass solos of the "Chough and Crow." The *Meg Merrilies* of the night was Mrs. Farren; *Julia Mannering*, Miss Petrie.

After a few nights' performances of good plays and farces by the stock company, the horses were introduced and dramatic and equestrian performances given in conjunction; for a few nights the receipts were fair, but afterwards began to dwindle, becoming "small by degrees and beautifully less." The fact was, that about this time the financial difficulties of the West had just reached a climax, and as the pressure in the money market became heavy the people's purses became tight, and very few felt like spending more money than absolute necessity demanded. We saw plainly that we, too, must reduce our expenses or we could not avoid losing heavily during the season; so we sent away our troupe of equestrians to perform under canvas during the summer and early fall, with instructions to begin in Kentucky, proceeding south through that State, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Louisiana, and meet us in New Orleans early in November. Mr. James P. Bailey, our principal clerk, went as financial manager and treasurer, and Mr. John Robinson as equestrian director.

Early in May, Hackett performed a short engagement with us, going through his usual round of characters, as *Falstaff*, in "Henry IV.," and the *Falstaff* of the "Merry Wives of Windsor;" *Nimrod Wildfire*, in the "Lion of the West," *Mons. Morbleu*, *Solomon Swap* (a Yankee), in Coleman's comedy of "Who wants a Guinea?" But owing to causes previously mentioned, of a general depression amongst the people, Mr. Hackett's engagement was not very successful. Following Mr. Hackett came Mrs. Fitzwilliam and Mr. Buckstone, who played a two weeks' engagement to very fair business, considering the times, but not equal to what they would have done under more favorable circumstances. The season had now reached the 1st of June, and not being likely to improve with the approaching hot weather, we commenced the benefits for all such as were entitled to them. Four or five of them proved profitable, Mrs. Farren's more than any other. The spring season closed about the middle of June for the usual summer vacation. During the vacation we came to the conclusion to try the experiment of reducing the prices of admission to the theatre, from seventy-five cents to fifty for dress-circle and parquet, from fifty to thirty cents for second tier or family-circle, leaving the gallery at the old price, twenty-five cents. In all well-regulated theatres in America, where good plays and farces are acted by performers of respectable talent, and the highest price does not exceed one dollar, it has always been, in my opinion, a questionable policy to lower the prices of admission. Experience and observation have shown me,

in all instances, that the result was in no way desirable. Such a course generally increases the number of visitors, but not the aggregate amount of cash receipts, and invariably shows a diminution in intelligence and average respectability of the audiences. Such was the result with us in this instance.

CHAPTER LII.

Season of 1841 — American Theatre — “London Assurance,” First Time — Joseph Foster — Equestrians sent to Natchez — Afterwards to Havana — Failure — Sol. Smith in Difficulties — Otto Motty — Signor Marti and Troupe in New Orleans — St. Charles Theatre Burned — Mrs. Fitzwilliam and Mr. Buckstone — They go to Mobile — St. Louis Season of 1842 — Losing Season — American Theatre, New Orleans, Burned — Rebuilt on the Site of the St. Charles — A Stratagem — Unsuccessful — Dramatic Company Play in Vicksburg — Biography of James Thorne — Biography of Miss Petrie.

THE American Theatre, Poydras Street, New Orleans, opened for the season November 20, 1841, with the comedy of the “Heir at Law,” cast as follows: *Lord Duberly*, Mr. Farren; *Doctor Pangloss*, N. M. Ludlow; *Dick Dowlas*, DeBar; *Zekiel Homespun*, Sol. Smith; *Steadfast*, Webb; *Kenrick*, J. Thorne; *Lady Duberly*, Mrs. Russell; *Cecily Homespun*, Mrs. Farren; *Caroline Dormer*, Miss Petrie; the evening concluding with the farce of “’Tis She!” Receipts of the first night, \$400.

After we had performed for a few nights, the equestrians that had been sent on a travelling adventure for the summer, under the direction and supervision of Mr. John Robinson and Mr. James P. Bailey, returned to us, but in a shocking bad plight; the horses seemed jaded, the dresses tarnished and ragged, and the men worn and haggard as a troop of dragoons after a month’s hard fighting and hard riding. After their resting a few days, and we had been enabled to get the horses, their trappings, and dresses repaired and put into decent condition, we brought out the equestrians in performances of the circle, giving a good comedy or drama on the stage to commence the evening with. But it would not do; after the first two nights they did not appear to be any extra attraction, so we sent them off to perform under canvas in different parts of the city.

About the beginning of the year 1842, Messrs. Fogg & Stickney revisited New Orleans with their equestrian troupe; and Mr. Caldwell having attributed our success of the previous season as mainly due to the attraction of the horses, engaged this entire troupe, at a heavy expense, in the hope of dividing the patronage of such amusements at least, and thus

as much as possible prevent our success for a second season; whereupon we changed our tactics. We sent our horses away, as I have before stated, to a remote part of the city.

About this time "*London Assurance*," that well-known comedy from the pen of Mr. Dion Boucicault and John Brougham, had reached our country and been produced with great success in New York. It had been underlined in the bills of the St. Charles Theatre as in preparation, for some considerable time, when we received our copy of the play, and it was supposed would be produced there within a week or ten days. We commenced at once, actively, to get it ready for the public, and in one week from the receipt of the play we brought it out at our theatre in a very handsome style, and had played it for about a week before it was produced at the St. Charles. When it was produced at the latter theatre it certainly was, as far as the stage appointments were concerned, superior to ours, — the conservatory scene especially, — but in the acting was not as well done. However, to use a slang phrase, the gilding was worn off from the gingerbread, and the cake was not very salable. Here Mr. Caldwell, with all his shrewdness and policy, — and he really possessed both, in no small degree, — committed a most egregious blunder. He never should have brought the horses into the "temple," as he used to call it, nor desecrated the floor where only the muses should have been permitted to tread. Then, again, he should have brought out "*London Assurance*" as soon as possible after obtaining a copy of it, and not have given a rival theatre an opportunity of anticipating him. The introduction of the horses and the production of "*London Assurance*" were both failures at the St. Charles; at least, they did not pay the manager for his expense and trouble.

Some time early in the year 1842 there arrived in New Orleans a Mr. Joseph Foster, an Englishman, who was highly recommended to us as most efficient in the getting up of equestrian melodramatic plays. It was said he had brought out many such at Astley's Amphitheatre, London, in a style that had never been equalled even there. We engaged this man at a large salary, settled upon the dramas to be produced, and gave him a *carte-blanc* to proceed upon. He did produce three pieces in most magnificent style, viz., the "*Naiad Queen*," "*Napoleon*," and "*Dick Turpin*;" and although these dramas had quite a successful run, for those days, the bills of expense run up for them produced a run upon the treasurer that almost induced him to run away and abandon the whole concern to the host of carpenters, machinists, seam-

stresses, fancy-store keepers, and others that daily thronged the office. These dramas were well performed, and the theatre well filled almost every night of their production ; but at the close of the season, after summing up every expense connected with them, I found we had paid out more than a thousand dollars over what we had cleared above our usual current expenses. So much for the experiment of bringing out pieces *a la* Astley.

In order that the equestrian wing of our establishment should be placed in a position in which they might at least make their own expenses, they were dispatched to Natchez, under the direction of my partner, Mr. Smith ; but after a fortnight's trial there, Mr. Smith came back with less money than he went away with. Mr. Smith now proposed that the equestrian wing be sent to Havana, Cuba. This I was opposed to, on the ground that the expense of transporting our full stud of horses and their riders and luggage by sea, that distance and back, and the chance of losing some of the horses overboard in case of rough weather, with other objections, made the undertaking, in my opinion, objectionable and very hazardous ; but after long debates on the subject, I yielded to his views, provided he was willing to go with them and take charge of the whole concern. This I found him quite ready to do, saying he had long wished to visit Havana. Some time about the 1st of February, 1842, Mr. Smith embarked with our equestrian troupe for Havana. After he had been there about a month he found that his expedition, as far as profits were concerned, was a failure ; and he wrote to me that unless I sent him some money, he would be unable to quit the island. There was a law existing there then, and probably is still, which prohibited any person obtaining a passport to leave the island while there was any claim existing in the courts of law against him. Mr. Smith had been enabled to pay all debts, or, in other words, had contracted none outside of his own company ; to them he had become largely indebted, for unpaid salaries. All of these were content to await his return to New Orleans before being paid the amounts due them, excepting one, a German, who called himself Otto Motty. This man insisted upon having every dollar due him paid there, on the spot, and without any delay ; so, presented his claim in one of the minor courts, got a judgment instantly, and Smith, in a moment of anger and disgust, sold some of the horses, paid the unreasonable rascal, and sent him away. This fellow was not an equestrian, but one who used to do the heavy business in the ring ; that is, he used to play with the large cannon-balls

as an ordinary man would toss oranges, hold a large field-piece on his shoulder while it was fired off, and support himself on trestles by his head and feet with a blacksmith's anvil on his breast, while two men with heavy hammers struck repeated blows upon the anvil. My partner returned to New Orleans a wiser, but not a richer man.

Early in the year 1842, Mr. James H. Caldwell rented his St. Charles Theatre for one month to Signor Marti, manager of the Tacon Theatre, Havana; the Signor promising to present to the New Orleans public a series of Italian operas by his grand troupe of singers from the Tacon Theatre. The troupe was a good one, and the operas produced were performed in a very superior style. They commenced about the 1st of March, proceeding in a very satisfactory manner to the public, when on Sunday evening, the 13th of that month, about six o'clock, the great St. Charles Theatre was said to be on fire. I was at my residence, on Carondelet Street, and when the alarm was given I stepped to the door and was told, "The theatre is on fire." Fearful that it was our own, I hurried out in that direction, but soon discovered the crowd gathered on St. Charles Street, opposite to the theatre. Being apprehensive that our own theatre might become endangered by the conflagration of that large building, I summoned all the carpenters, scene-shifters, and others of our establishment, and had them prepare to remove our scenery and other property whenever I should give them the word to do so. While gazing on the magnificent building, I saw, with feelings of sorrow, the flames drawn into the back windows, which had been left open. In a few minutes they were seen bursting from the side windows, and I saw then the total destruction of the building was inevitable. It was a sad sight; and although a rival theatre, I felt sincere regret in beholding such a grand temple of the Muses swept away, and probably lost forever to the good city of New Orleans, — a city where the people had always supported the legitimate Drama with princely liberality.

The opera troupe met with no loss of property, excepting a few dresses which had been sent to the theatre for that night's use. The fire that destroyed this theatre commenced in the workshop of an undertaker, immediately adjoining the rear of it, where a quantity of shavings and other combustible materials had, in the process of coffin-making, accumulated. By some means, I believe never known, these became ignited; and the workshop being on that day (Sunday) not occupied, and also hidden from view of any one passing in the street, was fully

on fire before discovered, and the flames creeping up the rear of the theatre. Before engines could be got to play upon the flames, the fire had found a way into the theatre, and the whole interior was filled with the raging element of destruction.

After the burning of the St. Charles Theatre, Signor Marti made an arrangement with the manager of the French Theatre, on Orleans Street, for the occupancy of his building three nights in a week, and there completed his proposed number of operatic nights in New Orleans. This venture of Signor Marti's was as unfortunate for him as our trip to Havana was to us, and he never tried it again.

Late in February, 1842, Mrs. Fitzwilliam and Mr. Buckstone conjointly commenced an engagement with us of four weeks, which was divided by an engagement at Mobile of two weeks, in the new theatre of Mr. Caldwell. Both their engagements with us were highly successful. Not so their engagement in Mobile, it not being equal to what such artists deserved. The interior arrangements of the theatre, not being under the immediate direction of Mr. Caldwell, were loosely and badly conducted. A circumstance of the most appalling nature transpired during the engagement of Mrs. Fitzwilliam and Buckstone, that caused a thrill of horror to pass through the minds of the good citizens of Mobile, creating an excitement that absorbed all other public emotions, and cast a gloom for awhile on theatrical amusements. This deed of horror was the murder of a young man named Ewing, an actor in the company, who was stabbed by a Miss Hamblin, said to be his wife. In a fit of jealousy, she entered his dressing-room and stabbed him to the heart. She was arrested and in due time tried, and acquitted upon grounds the strangest that I ever heard of.

It was shown in the evidence that the young man had been for a number of years subject to heart disease, and it is reported that the judge on the occasion, in his charge to the jury, said that as young Ewing had been subject to that disease, he might have died from an attack of it produced by fright! "O upright judge! how much more elder art thou than thy looks!"

Our season in New Orleans, of 1841-2, was brought to a close early in April; and owing to the heavy expenses under which we had been laboring, of a double company, — dramatic and equestrian, — and failure of the latter to prove attractive during the season, we had failed to pay Messrs. Dubois & Kendig the whole amount of rent due them. But they agreed to give us time to do this, and offered to take our note for

\$2,400, the balance due them, payable on the 1st of January, 1843. In order that there should be no delay, through forms of law, in the event of the death of any of the parties, we were to confess judgment on the note, with the friendly understanding that no advantage should improperly be taken of it. Having paid every one else all that we owed them, we departed with our company for St. Louis.

Our spring season in St. Louis, of 1842, commenced early in May; we opening with a good comedy and farce to two hundred dollars, paper currency, worth on an average about fifty cents on the dollar, specie standard. The principal circulation was city corporation money, with a small amount of a few banks in the Western States, but a trifle better than the above. Thus did we begin a season in a fine theatre, and a good company of actors, with the prices of admission fifty, thirty, and twenty-five cents, and obliged to take a currency that actually reduced the rates to twenty-five, fifteen, and twelve and a half cents, specie standard. The prospect was certainly not very pleasant, and the end was quite in keeping with the beginning. I shall pass over this season as briefly as the records of a few incidents will allow.

Mrs. William Sefton, late Mrs. J. W. Wallack, Jr., played a two weeks' engagement with us, conjointly with Mr. E. S. Conner, but it did not yield them or the management enough to pay them for their trouble. A few other "stars" struggled along, played, and departed pretty much in the same plight as the above-named persons. The spring season closed as usual, the latter part of June. We opened again for the fall season about the 1st of September. We had a few "stars" during the fall season, who played to average receipts somewhat better than those of the spring; but after paying these transient luminaries, we generally came off *minus*.

This same year of 1842 I have set down in the calendar of my theatrical life as the most disastrous one in the eighteen managerial years of Ludlow & Smith. On the 30th of July, 1842, our theatre, the American, standing on Poydras Street, New Orleans, *was burned to the ground!* This was a sudden and heavy blow to us, — especially heavy because of our situation at the time, following immediately on the heels of a very unfortunate year for us, financially. We had just made engagements East with a number of "stars" for the coming New Orleans season, and had increased our stock company for that city, and all of a sudden we found ourselves without a theatre there in which we could fulfil our engagements thus made.

As soon as I heard of the disaster, I wrote immediately to

my partner on the subject, who received my letter in Baltimore, Maryland, and desired him to come immediately to St. Louis, feeling there would be a necessity for one of us to go to New Orleans without delay. I wrote also to Messrs. Dubois & Kendig, at New Orleans, to know what they intended to do in regard to rebuilding the theatre. I endeavored to see Mr. Dubois, whose family residence was in St. Louis, and who generally passed his summers in that city. He was, when I applied, temporarily absent ; but in a few days he returned, and we met and had a conversation on the subject of the theatre. He told me that he had received letters from his partner, Mr. Kendig, at New Orleans, and that from the tenor of them, and their perfect unison with his own views, he thought there was scarcely a doubt that they would immediately commence the work of rebuilding the theatre ; and concluded by saying, that unless some unlooked-for disaster interfered with their work, we might rest assured that the house would be ready for us by the middle of November ensuing, when we could take possession and proceed under the lease as though no fire had occurred.

My partner having returned from the East, I informed him of the conversations had with Mr. Dubois ; and that gentleman shortly after meeting with Mr. Smith, the same assurances were made to him that the theatre would be ready for us in the following month of November. Under the conviction that all was understood and going on as we wished, we went to work in making preparations to get new scenery ready for the then progressing building.

Our losses by the burning of the theatre, in the way of scenery and other property owned by us and remaining there when we closed our previous season, we considered as having cost us from ten to twelve thousand dollars. We were never able to ascertain positively in what manner the theatre had been set on fire, — for that it had been purposely fired there was no kind of doubt. It had not been occupied in any way for over a month, and the last person that had access to the interior of it was a stage-carpenter named C——, whom, through our agent, we had put out of the occupancy of a room within it, for a beastly and outrageous piece of conduct too disgusting to be mentioned. This man had been heard to say he “ would be even with us ! ” While we were endeavoring to obtain sufficient evidence to convict, he was arrested for a repetition of the same crime, tried, convicted, and sent to the State penitentiary, where I was told he died after two or three years of incarceration.

About the middle of September, a clerk of Messrs. Dubois & Kendig arrived in St. Louis, and we were told by him that the theatre was progressing rapidly, and would certainly be ready for us early in November; and this was again repeated by Mr. Dubois, and with full assurances that we might depend upon it. About the 1st of October, we received a confidential letter from a friend of ours in New Orleans, setting forth circumstances which led him to believe that there was some underhand work going on in that city by certain individuals which would prevent our getting possession of the new American Theatre, then in a very forward state towards completion. This was to us a most unlooked-for and confounding statement, but one that produced grave evidences of a sound judgment and a warrantable conclusion. Mr. Dubois was again interviewed in reference to the theatre, and although he seemed in some measure embarrassed by our questionings, yet he persisted in assuring us that the theatre should be ready for us to occupy in November, and concluded his remarks by saying he was about to start for New Orleans to look into the progress of the business.

On consultation, it was agreed by my partner and myself that he should proceed to New Orleans without delay, with the view of looking after our interests in that city. He, being the one who made the original contract with Dubois & Kendig, was best acquainted with all the particulars, unwritten as well as written, connected with the transaction thereof; while I, who had been managing the affairs of the company during the existing summer, was so blended with the concluding business of it as to make my presence absolutely necessary in St. Louis.

About the middle of October, Mr. Smith embarked on a steamer for New Orleans, with Mr. Dubois for a fellow-passenger. On the 20th of the same month, they arrived in the "Crescent City," and in a few hours after found out that all which had been reported to us was but too true,—Mr. Kendig had leased the new American Theatre to James H. Caldwell,—and that Ludlow & Smith, within a month's time of their expected opening, had no theatre. The situation may easier be conceived than described.

In regard to the burning of the American Theatre, and the perplexities and embarrassments in consequence thereof, I shall say but little more. My partner, Mr. Smith, in his book, published in 1868, has given a full account of the particulars; and those who feel any desire to be acquainted with them, are referred to that book. I would wish it to be understood that

my individual opinion is in perfect unison with that of my partner, that Mr. Dubois was not a willing accessory of his partner's treachery. Of the machinations of Mr. Caldwell and the duplicity of Mr. Kendig, it is my opinion Mr. Dubois was not assured until his partner had so far involved the firm that a dissent on his part would have produced a rupture of their entire affairs. While this fraud was being perpetrated, Mr. Dubois was with his family in St. Louis, where I often met him, and was always unequivocally assured by him that the theatre was in progress of erection in accordance with the understanding existing between us, and would be ready for us to commence our season by the middle of the ensuing November.

And now, just here, I desire to record, without disguise, hypocrisy, or any other feeling but that of candor, my unqualified admiration of the tact, judgment, skill, and energy exhibited by my partner in the treatment of the various and complicated difficulties that arose out of the burning of the American Theatre.

In 1835, when James H. Caldwell built the St. Charles Theatre, it was understood, at the time, that he obtained a large sum of money from the Gas Bank of New Orleans, to aid him in erecting that building, giving the bank, as security, a mortgage on the ground, which he then owned, and on the building which he was about to erect on it. After the theatre thus erected was burnt, in March, 1842, Mr. Caldwell transferred the ground and the ruins on it to the Gas Bank, in settlement of its claims against him. I mention this, merely that the reader may understand what follows.

My partner, Mr. Smith, had been in New Orleans only about a week, when he wrote to me at St. Louis that he had made an arrangement with the Gas Bank of that city for a lease of the lot on which the late St. Charles Theatre had stood, and had obtained also a promise from that institution of financial assistance. He further stated that he was going to work immediately to see what could be done with contractors and builders, for the erection of a theatre in the shortest possible time. It was not long before I received another letter from him, stating that he had succeeded in finding an architect, carpenter, bricklayers, and others who would undertake the erection of the theatre, receiving a portion of their money during the progress of the building, and giving us time for the payment of the remainder. He further said he had obtained a lease of the ground for five years, renewable for five years more, at our discretion. I need not say, perhaps, that the intelligence was to me highly gratifying.

During this time I was working along with the St. Louis season, making all kinds of efforts to save us from losing money in its progress; looking forward, though, with dread to the time when the weather would be so cold that our summer theatre could not be warmed. About the middle of November my partner wrote to me that they had cleared away the ruins of the old St. Charles Theatre, and had commenced laying the brick of the north wall for a new theatre, saying they had determined to use the south wall of the old theatre, then standing. I wrote to him immediately that I did not approve of using the old wall, however sound it might appear to be; that the new walls would certainly settle some, in time, while the old wall would not, and the result would be a crack in the new wall that might create alarm, if not cause a break-down in the structure. But he replied immediately that this would be guarded against in building the new walls in such a way that the settling would be trifling, if any, and that the architect, Mr. Gott, had assured him that no danger need be apprehended; and a test of thirty-eight years has shown that Mr. Gott was right.

About the middle of November, our audiences, which had not been very extensive for some weeks, began to show evident signs of shrinkage, and a sensitiveness to the touch of Jack Frost; and the wild geese—sensible birds!—were flying southward, and I determined to follow their example. Mr. James Thorne, then with us, informed me there was a small temporary theatre in Vicksburg, that he had been the manager of not long before, and that he had no doubt that I could get it on my own terms. I wrote as he directed me, and without any difficulty made an arrangement for occupancy of it for one month or more, at my discretion. I put up at once the names of certain persons entitled to benefits, which, as a general matter, were but poorly attended, and closed the St. Louis Theatre about the last of November, taking our departure on a steamer for Vicksburg, where we arrived safely in four or five days, and commenced climbing the hills of that highly aristocratic city.

After landing at Vicksburg and getting my baggage to a hotel, I started out to look for the theatre; and after climbing hills until I had scarcely any breath left, I found it, as Smith would have said, a-w-a-a-y out of town. It appeared to have been a warehouse originally, fitted up very roughly, and would hold three or four hundred people.

Knowing that I had to pass at least a month in that city,

and having a dislike to hotels as lodging-houses, I started out to hunt up private boarding, and succeeded, without any difficulty, in finding a nice, clean-looking house, and bargained with the lady for a room and my meals. Before leaving her, I asked her if she could accommodate me with a night-key, for, being a member of a theatrical company that had just arrived in town, I should be out late at nights, and did not wish to keep any one up for the purpose of letting me in. The moment I said the word "theatrical," I observed that she changed color. With a half-smothered voice she said, "Theatre;" and then, with mock civility, "I am very sorry, sir, but I cannot accommodate you;" and would have closed the door in my face, but that I suddenly stepped back and retreated down the steps, muttering to myself, "Betsy, take in the shirts, the players have come!" the old story told of a woman in a country town of England. I was then directed to a private house where I was told they occasionally took one or two boarders. To this house I went. It was a building that had been erected for the use of a Railroad Bank. It was large, had a number of fine rooms, and was occupied by Dr. M——n and family. I rang the door-bell, asked for Dr. M., and was shown into a very well furnished, small reception-room. The doctor soon presented himself, and was a fine specimen of the Virginia gentleman. I told him what I wished, and concluded with saying that, if agreeable, I would like to stop a month or more with him. "Certainly, sir," he replied; "you appear to be a gentleman." "I will first make you assured of that," I replied. "I have a letter here to Mr. H——t, of your city; you can read it, and form your opinion accordingly." "Not at all, sir," said he; "it is not necessary." Hesitating a moment, I then said, "But, sir, I am an *actor*, and perhaps that may be objectionable." "By no means," he rejoined; "I like you the better with that knowledge." "And you are absolutely willing to take me as a boarder after being informed that I am an *actor*!" "Sir," said he, in a good-natured, jolly manner, "I would not take you if you were anything else!" and the dialogue ended in a hearty laugh by both. The doctor had me located in a very pleasant room, and I was never more comfortable in my life than while under his roof.

I heard a few years afterwards that this gentleman was killed in an encounter with another, in the streets of Vicksburg, both being armed with pistols.

Our opening night in Vicksburg was not very flattering,

the house not being more than half filled ; but the performance pleased the people, and I had the satisfaction of finding our receipts nightly increasing in amount.

During the last week of December I received a letter from my partner, dated on Christmas Day, wishing me "a merry Christmas and a happy new year," and conveying the pleasing intelligence that the new St. Charles Theatre would be ready to open between the 10th and 15th of the ensuing month, and requesting me to hold myself in readiness accordingly. This was as unexpected as it was gratifying ; I could hardly believe it possible, although I was fully persuaded that great efforts had been made towards a speedy accomplishment of this great necessity.

I went to work immediately to close up the season in Vicksburg, and in doing so gave a few benefits that had not been promised, in order to compensate certain married persons for the unexpected disturbance of their family arrangements by this flying visit of the company to Vicksburg.

Before proceeding to make any mention of the opening of the new St. Charles Theatre, I desire to make a statement of facts that will show that Mr. James H. Caldwell had not abandoned his *crushing system*, declared to me in 1824. As soon as Mr. Caldwell became assured that Ludlow & Smith would get the St. Charles Theatre erected, he commenced a process by which he thought he could prevent their opening it, crush them completely, and stamp them out forever. The reader may remember that I have previously stated that Ludlow & Smith had given to Dubois & Kendig a note for \$2,400 in the spring of 1842, falling due in January, 1843. This note Caldwell had become the owner of, in the arrangement with Kendig for the American Theatre, and had obtained a subrogation, or transfer, of the judgment to him, that had been by us confessed when the note was given. Supposing we could not pay the note, from the fact that we were building a theatre that he thought must undoubtedly have involved all the resources we possessed for raising money, he advertised the new St. Charles Theatre to be sold at public sale, to pay a judgment which he held against the firm of Ludlow & Smith. But the smartest men very often find their plans thwarted at the very moment they deem their success most certain ; and thus it happened with Mr. James H. Caldwell. Mr. Smith chanced to find a person in New Orleans who had purchased of the lamented Tyrone Power notes of James H. Caldwell, given Mr. Power for unpaid amounts due him by Mr. Caldwell on his engagement of twenty-five nights in the St. Charles Theatre during

the season of 1841-2. These notes were largely in excess of the amount of the judgment held by Caldwell against Ludlow & Smith, and these notes the holder of them thought it most conducive to his interest to place at the service of Ludlow & Smith; and these notes were used by them to satisfy the *crushing* judgment obtained by James H. Caldwell. How true are the words that "man proposes, but God disposes." In all instances where men permit their rancorous feelings to urge them to commit acts of injustice to their fellow-men, "their evil deeds return to plague the inventors."

I forgot to mention that, at the close of our St. Louis season in the fall of 1842, Mr. James Thorne and also Miss Eliza Petrie left our company. It was the last I saw of Mr. Thorne, — as kind-hearted a gentleman as I ever knew, and a jovial, good fellow.

Of Miss Petrie I know but little, although she was for a long time a member of our company. I will, however, state what I do know in regard to both: —

Mr. James Thorne was born in England, about the year 1800, and made his first appearance at Drury Lane, in 1819, as *Florian*, in the "Devil's Bridge." He came to America in the summer of 1830, and made his first appearance at the Park Theatre, New York, on the 8th of November, 1830, as *Count Belino*, in the opera of the "Devil's Bridge." He was announced from the English Opera-house. Mr. Thorne's selection for his first appearance was a most unfortunate one, and gave but little promise of the merit he afterwards displayed. The part was unsuited to his voice, which was a fine barytone, — or, I should say, basso, — of great power and smoothness, and well adapted to the range of many characters in which he subsequently gave great pleasure; in *Figaro*, *Baron Pompolino*, *Caliban*, *Gabriel* in "Guy Mannering," and other similar parts. He last appeared in New York in 1834. He was with me at Louisville in 1831; afterwards in St. Louis, in 1838-9 and 1842. He was a manager at one time with J. M. Scott, and performed in Cincinnati and other Western theatres. He died at sea, when on his voyage from New Orleans to England, in the summer of 1843, aged about forty-three years.

Miss Eliza Petrie was supposed by many to be the daughter of Mr. James Petrie, an Englishman, a would-be actor, and a tolerably fair barytone singer at one time. But this supposed parentage must have been a mistake, for Miss Petrie joined my company at Cincinnati in the fall of 1830, and must then have been at least sixteen years of age. This would necessitate her having been born in 1814. Now, I met Mr. Petrie in Mr.

Caldwell's company at New Orleans in the spring of 1821, and he went with us to Virginia, and reported himself then an unmarried man. Mother and daughter were, I think, both born in the United States, and both were members of my company in 1837-8, the mother then being the wife of a Mr. Salzman, a German musician.

Miss Petrie was considered a very fair singer in her day, and although her voice was not powerful, it was very sweet, and of considerable compass. She had very little power as an actress, yet she played a great variety of business very passably. About 1845-6, she was married to Mr. Robert L. Place, then managing the American Theatre at New Orleans. A year or so after the death of Mr. Place, this lady went East, and performed in Philadelphia several years, and died there.

CHAPTER LIII.

New St. Charles Opened, January 18, 1843 — Opening Address — American Theatre Opens and Closes — Miss Lee, Danseuse — Mrs. Neafie — Dan Marble — Mr. G. Vandenhoff — His Biography — Mr. Sinclair — Mrs. Stuart — Dr. Lardner — J. M. Field's Burlesque — Miss C. Chapman — Chapman Family — Floating Theatre — "Dr. Heavy Beavy" — Close of Season — After Season — Company sent to Mobile by J. H. Caldwell — St. Louis Theatre Sold — Bought by Mr. Collier — Re-rented by Ludlow & Smith — Season in St. Louis, 1843 — Miss C. Chapman — Old Louisville Theatre Burned — Death of Sam Drake, Sr., 1854 — Death of Charles Eaton.

NEW ST. CHARLES THEATRE. — This building, says Mr. Sol. Smith in his book, was erected in forty working days. This, I presume, is true, although I have no personal knowledge of the fact. From the commencement of the foundation to the first night of performance was about sixty days; but there were many heavy rains during that fall, and it is probable that from that and other causes twenty days may have been lost in the work of its erection.

The following is a copy of the house-bill of the opening night: —

ST. CHARLES THEATRE.

Lessees and Managers *Ludlow & Smith.*

Being impressed with the belief that the public can very well dispense with play-bill puffs and extravagant eulogiums on the performers who enact the plays which are represented; believing that visitors to the theatre may possibly be capable of distinguishing the different grades of talent possessed by the several actors, without the aid of capital letters to enlighten their powers of perception; supposing that there are individuals attached to the dramatic profession who possess considerable merit, but are willing to form engagements for longer periods than six nights, and being convinced that the true interests of the drama call for reformation in the style and manner of making announcements, the management of the new St. Charles propose: First, to issue posting-bills of a uniform size throughout the season, and printed on a single sheet. Second, to cause the names of the characters in the pieces represented, and the names of the performers appointed to enact them, to be printed on the bills in a uniform size. Third, to confine the notices emanating from this establishment to a plain and simple statement of the entertainments each night, the cast of the characters, and such other information relative to the performances as may be deemed proper to communicate to the public. Fourth, to make no statements whatever of *the great success* which has attended the representation of a play, or of the numerous requests at the box-office for its repetition. Fifth, to make no promises without the full assurance of being able to fulfil them, or to announce engagements with eminent individuals for limited periods, until they have actually arrived in the city; to advertise no pieces with new "scenery, dresses, and decorations," unless such appointments are in readiness. And, finally, the management is resolved to make

this new "temple," now to be opened to the public, no party to the system of deception which has been generally practised for many years throughout the theatrical world.

Miss Mary Ann Lee,
Miss Caroline Chapman,
Miss Eliza Logan,
Miss Ellen Mathews,
Miss Theresa Chapman,

Miss E. Warren,

Mr. J. M. Field,
Mr. D. Marble,
Mr. William Chapman,
Mr. J. A. J. Neafie,
Mr. B. DeBar,
Mr. W. G. Jones,
Mr. G. P. Farren,
Mr. Anderson,
Mr. Eddy,
Mr. Hamilton,
Mr. H. Chapman,

Mrs. Farren,
Mrs. Russell,
Mrs. Eddy,
Mrs. Warren,
Mrs. Newton,

Mr. Burns,
Mr. Bingham,
Mr. A. J. Marks,
Mr. Lake,
Mr. R. Russell,
Mr. Newton,
Mr. Cook,
Mr. Mack,
Mr. McVickers,
Mr. N. M. Ludlow,
Mr. Sol. Smith.

The orchestra will be under the direction of Mr. Verron. Scenic artist, Mr. S. B. Stockwell.

This evening, Wednesday, January 18, 1843, the new St. Charles will be opened to the public, and the first performance will take place, commencing with an overture by the orchestra; immediately after which will be recited an *appropriate address*, written by a gentleman of New Orleans. Then will take place the performance of Tobin's comedy, entitled the "HONEYMOON:"

<i>The Duke of Aranza</i>	Mr. Ludlow.
<i>Rolando</i>	Mr. De Bar.
<i>Count Montalban</i>	Mr. Eddy.
<i>Balthazar</i>	Mr. Anderson.
<i>Dr. Lampedo</i>	Mr. Farren.
<i>Campillo</i>	Mr. Newton.
<i>Lopez</i>	Mr. H. Chapman.
<i>Jaques (the Mock Duke)</i>	Mr. Sol. Smith.
<i>Servants</i>	Messrs. Mack, McVickers, etc.
<i>Juliana</i>	Mrs. Farren.
<i>Volante</i>	Miss C. Chapman.
<i>Zamora</i>	Miss Logan.
<i>Hostess</i>	Mrs. Russell.
<i>Mrs. Lopez</i>	Mrs. Newton.

Villagers by ladies of the company.

An overture by the band.

The entertainment will terminate with Buckstone's afterpiece, called "The Dead Shot:"

<i>Mr. Hector Timid</i>	Mr. W. Chapman.
<i>Mr. Wiseman</i>	Mr. Newton.
<i>Frederick</i>	Mr. Burns.
<i>Captain Cannon</i>	Mr. Farren.
<i>Officers</i>	Messrs. Mack and McVickers.
<i>Louisa Lovetrick</i>	Miss C. Chapman.
<i>Chatter</i>	Mrs. Warren.

The box-office will be opened daily at ten o'clock in the morning, and remain open until five o'clock in the evening, for the sale of seats and boxes.

The prices of admission will be: to the balustrade boxes and Logette seats (in the dress-circles), one dollar; pit, fifty cents; gallery, twenty-five cents. Doors open at six, and overture to begin at seven o'clock punctually.

The laws of the city regulating theatres will be observed. Attentive and civil officers will be in attendance.

Before proceeding further, I desire to make acknowledgments to Mr. Francis D. Gott, architect of the new St. Charles Theatre, for the taste, skill, and energy evinced by him in the construction of that building; also to Mr. J. P. Pike and Jamison & Mackintosh, builders and bricklayers, for the rapidity and stability with which their portion of the work was performed; and though last, not least, to Mr. Patrick Irwin, for his friendly assistance in many instances; and finally, to all of these gentlemen, for financial indulgences beyond what we had any right to expect. There are other parties of whom I would like to make mention, and to whom we were indebted for kindness and indulgence, but that I know their generous natures would recoil from the publicity.

The second American Theatre opened under the management of James H. Caldwell, about the middle of December, 1842. The business was, at the first, not at all encouraging, and gradually grew worse and worse. Public opinion was decidedly against encouraging this theatre; the reason for which, we thought, was the low strategy that had been practised against us. This may or may not have been so; but certain it is, that in about three weeks from the opening of this theatre a public poster appeared, with Mr. Caldwell's name to it, announcing his determination to close the establishment, and renounce it and the profession of the stage forever.

On the night of January 14, 1843, Mr. Caldwell acted *Vapid*, in the comedy of the "Dramatist," and at the close of it he advanced to the front of the stage and addressed the audience, stating that he appeared before them for the last time as either actor or manager; that he was about to quit the stage, as no longer worthy of his regard or exertions, and should henceforth devote his mind to other pursuits. The drop-curtain of the mimic scene then descended, and shut out from its stage the would-be autocrat of the Western Drama. This great defeat, which Mr. Caldwell, in his blind fury, had brought upon himself, he must have felt severely. He saw Ludlow & Smith, the very men, of all others, he desired most to crush, occupying a fine theatre on the very ground he had but recently owned, and on which he had erected but a few years before a "temple" of the Drama. He saw that the descending weight which he designed should crush them, was by his own misconduct made to fall upon himself. The blow was stunning, and indeed discomfiting.

After Mr. Caldwell had abdicated the managerial throne

and laid down his sceptre of authority, the American Theatre was again opened, I believe, as a commonwealth, — that is, the performers all sharing in the ratio of their salaries under the late management. Mrs. Ann Sefton was placed at the head of the bills, ostensibly as manageress. This lady, although a clever actress, better known as Mrs. J. W. Wallack, Jr., did not succeed in management any better than her predecessor, Mr. Caldwell, and the house was again closed. Again, in no long space of time, it was reopened under a Mr. William Dinneford, of New York notoriety; but again it collapsed, and closed then for the season. Second night of the St. Charles Theatre, Miss Mary Ann Lee, from the Eastern theatres, was announced as engaged for a limited period; also Mr. J. M. Field. The latter appeared in the comedy of “Laugh when You Can,” and the farce of “A Lover by Proxy.” Miss Lee, a danseuse, appeared during the evening in the two dances, “El Jaleo de Xeres,” and the “Pas de Danube.” They were both given a friendly greeting; but the lady was by the majority, as is usual, put in comparison with Ellsler, and of course dropped behind in position. Mr. Field, although a favorite, was not a novelty. The receipts of the night were a little more than half as much as the first one. The third night brought out Mr. J. A. J. Neafie, as a semi-“star,” in *St. Pierre*, in Sheridan Knowles’s play of “The Wife.” Miss Lee in two dances, and Mr. Field in the farce, “A Lover by Proxy.” Receipts a slight improvement on the night previous. Fourth night, introduced for the first time Mr. W. G. Jones as “Philip,” a sailor, in the drama of the “Lost Son.” Dance by Miss Lee, “L’Espagnole,” after which the comic opera called “Of Age Tomorrow,” in which Mr. Ludlow represented four different characters; evening concluding with dance, “Tyrolienne,” by Miss Lee. Receipts slightly improving. Fifth night, Coleman’s comedy of the “Heir at Law,” with the following cast of characters: *Doctor Pangloss*, Mr. Ludlow; *Lord Duberly*, Mr. G. P. Farren; *Zekiel Homespun*, Mr. W. Chapman; *Dick Dowlas*, Ben DeBar; *Kenrick*, Mr. Newton; *Henry Moreland*, Mr. Burns; *Lady Duberly*, Mrs. Russell; *Cecily Homespun*, Miss C. Chapman. Dancing by Miss Lee. Concluding with a farce, entitled “Curiosities of Literature,” in which Mr. J. M. Field appeared. Receipts not quite equal to the first night.

An idea had been started, and industriously circulated, that in consequence of the haste in which the St. Charles Theatre had been erected, it was not very safe for occupants. This, of course, had been operating against our receipts. As soon

as this report reached our ears, we got a committee of architects and builders — men of good repute — to examine into the condition of the house, and they reported the building every way safe, and firmly built. Notwithstanding this favorable report of the committee, stories were still kept up by certain evil-minded persons, with the view to injure us.

On January 23d, Mr. D. Marble made his first appearance, in Woodward's rural drama of the "*Forest Rose*;" but called by Mr. Marble the "*American Farmers, or the Yankee in Jersey*:" *Jonathan Ploughboy*, Mr. Marble; after which was performed "*Simpson & Co.*:" *Mr. Peter Simpson*, Mr. W. Chapman; *Mrs. Simpson*, Mrs. Farren; the evening concluding with the nautical drama of "*Black-eyed Susan*:" *William* (a sailor), Mr. Marble; *Susan*, Mrs. Farren. Mr. Marble afterwards performed *Sam Patch*, and *Diggory*, in "*All the World's a Stage*;" the "*Gamecock of the Wilderness*:" *Vermonter*; "*Jonathan in England*."

February 6th, Mr. James H. Hackett made his first appearance in the St. Charles Theatre, as *Sir John Falstaff*, in the first part of "*King Henry IV.*," to a tolerably full house. On the 7th, he appeared as *King Richard III.* Mr. Hackett's personation of this character was a smooth, even piece of acting; but there was nothing new, original, or particularly interesting in his representation of it. He professed to have played after the style and business of George Frederick Cooke. The business, possibly, might have been something like that of Mr. Cooke's, but for the style, — well, we will say nothing about that. The next night, Mr. Hackett appeared as *Sir John Falstaff*, in the "*Merry Wives of Windsor*;" *Mr. Ford*, Mr. Neafie; *Mr. Page*, DeBar; *Master Slender*, Mr. Ludlow; *Mrs. Ford*, Mrs. Farren; *Mrs. Page*, Miss C. Chapman. On the 13th, Mr. Hackett appeared as *Rip Van Winkle*, and the same night as *Nimrod Wildfire*, in the "*Kentuckian*." On the 17th, for his benefit, Mr. Hackett repeated the "*Merry Wives of Windsor*," and afterwards performed *Mons. Mallet*.

Mr. George Vandenhoff, then a young English actor of great promise, appeared on the 9th of February, for the first time in New Orleans, opening in the character of *Hamlet*, and gave entire satisfaction to a very select audience, though not a very crowded one. This gentleman played on alternate nights with Mr. Hackett. His second appearance was on the 11th, as *Macbeth*; on the 14th, as *Benedick*, in "*Much Ado About Nothing*;" on the 16th, for his benefit, the *Stranger*, and in the farce of "*A Day After the Wedding*," as *Colonel Freeloze*. Mr. Vandenhoff's engagement suffered

from the same causes that affected others, — a general derangement in financial affairs in the West and South. He performed two other nights, the 18th and 20th of February, enacting *Rolla*, in “*Pizarro*,” and *Benedick*.

As this is the only opportunity I may have to speak of Mr. Vandenhoff, I will add here a short sketch of his career on the stage. He was still living when these lines were written, and, I believe, residing in Boston, Massachusetts, occasionally making a trip abroad when called upon to lecture on Shakespeare and other writers. He is undoubtedly a fine reader, and possesses elocutionary powers in an eminent degree. George Vandenhoff was born, I believe, in Liverpool, England, about the year 1816; was educated for the bar, to which he was admitted, practised, and immediately prior to his joining the “stage,” held the important and lucrative office of solicitor to the trustees of the Liverpool Docks. Much against the wishes of his father, and his relatives generally, he made his *entrée* on the stage at Covent Garden, October 14, 1839, as *Don Leon*, in “*Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*,” one of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher which had been popular in England for many years previous. His success was decided, and the same play was announced for the ensuing evening, and continued on alternate nights for a fortnight. This success was remarkable, as being seldom the result of first appearances on the stage. But Mr. Vandenhoff had the *prestige* of his father’s name and professional standing as a popular actor and a highly respected man, to smooth the way for him. After the study and practice of three years in his own country, Mr. Vandenhoff came to America, and made his *début* on this continent in New York, at the Park Theatre on the 21st of September, 1842, in the character of *Hamlet*. He repeated it twice afterwards, and performed during the same engagement *Virginus*, *Leon*, *Macbeth*, *Richard III.*, *Claude Melnotte*, and *Benedick*. His first engagement was far from being satisfactory; owing, perhaps, more to untoward circumstances than to any great lack of talent in him. The country was just then passing through a financial crisis, and people were thinking more of saving themselves from bankruptcy than partaking of any kind of amusement. Shortly after, Mr. Vandenhoff tried his fortunes in the South and West, and performed in the new St. Charles Theatre a short time after it opened under the management of Ludlow & Smith, appearing in *Hamlet* February 9, 1843. His success was good, for the times, his benefit being quite a good one. He then went to Mobile, and performed an engagement there in Caldwell’s theatre.

then for one season under the management of Mr. Dumas, with Mr. Hodges as submanager for Dumas. His account of that engagement represents it as a very unpleasant and unprofitable one. Mr. Vandenhoff returned to the East by the Southern route, performing at Richmond (Virginia), Baltimore, and Philadelphia, where he met Miss Charlotte Cushman, and performed *Mercutio* to her *Romeo*, being for the benefit of the manager, Mr. Marshall.

Mr. John Sinclair, the English vocalist, was engaged for a limited number of nights, and made his first appearance in New Orleans at the St. Charles Theatre, on February 19, 1843, in the operatic drama called "Guy Mannering," in the character of *Henry Bertram*, giving the usual music of the piece, with one or two introductions of his own, and was well received. Mr. Sinclair, although then an old man, still had a clear, melodious voice, and gave his songs with very pleasing effect. On his second night, February 22d, he gave the public his rendition of *Masaniello*. His acting, as professionals would say, was "shy," but his singing was good, and he gave "My Sister Dear" with touching effect. On the 26th, Mr. Sinclair appeared as *Francis Osbaldistone*, in the musical drama of "Rob Roy," in which he gave some Scotch songs that would have thrilled the soul of Sir Walter himself, had his spirit been flitting about there. On the next night was produced the "Lord of the Isles," in which Mr. Sinclair acted *Ronald*, singing the music delightfully.

March 1st, Mrs. Mary Stuart began a short engagement, in Knowles's play of the "Wife," in which she enacted *Marianna*. She acted six nights, during which she performed *Miss Dorrillon*, in "Wives as They Were and Maids as They Are;" *Bianca*, in "Fazio," and *Portia*, in the "Merchant of Venice." This lady's engagement was not a success; although a clever actress, she had no celebrity.

On March 4th was produced, for the first time in his theatre, the grand scenic opera called "La Bayadere, or the Maid of Cashmere," with entire new scenery painted by Samuel B. Stockwell and assistants. The following is a cast of a few leading characters: *Unknown* (Brahma), Mr. J. M. Field; *Olifour*, Mr. DeBar; *Zoloe* (principal Bayadere), Miss Mary Ann Lee; *Fatima*, Miss C. Chapman. The piece was well put upon the stage, and proved a success. Mr. Field and Mr. DeBar, and the two ladies, Miss Lee and Miss Chapman, doing their characters with great credit to themselves, and displaying much versatility of talent. "La Bayadere" had a successful run of many nights. The disposition of the scenery,

and the skill with which it was painted, obtained for Mr. Stockwell great praise.

On the 13th of March, Dr. Lardner commenced a series of scientific lectures on astronomy, which proved to be tolerably successful. The entertainments of each evening consisted of dramatic performances, with the lectures on astronomy intervening, or concluding the evening. Dr. Lardner gave about twelve lectures, and drew to the house probably somewhat more than was paid him for his services.

Mr. Daniel Marble, after a temporary absence, returned and acted several nights. The nautical drama of the "Water Witch" was produced, in which he performed the character of *Nathan*.

Mrs. Stuart likewise returned, and performed a few more nights, on one of which she enacted *Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots*, with considerable effect.

On the 16th of March was produced a dramatic sketch written by Mr. J. M. Field, of which I append a description copied from a small bill of the night: "To conclude with a sketch intended as a burlesque on 'La Bayadere, or The Maid of Cashmere,' and entitled 'Buy it, Dear! 'Tis Made of Cashmere.' The music by O'Bear; the libretto by Straws; scenery by Fudge; properties by Trudge. *Unknown* (a very mysterious character), Mr. J. M. Field; *Allfours* (a regular trump-card), H. Chapman; *Stopjaw* (who on this occasion will let his voice out), Newton. Chorus by the company, led by Croaker; *Mlle. Lolo* (who can jump higher, etc.), Miss Mary Ann Lee; *Fatty-ma* (not so very fat either), DeBar; *Mlle. Tinki* (no slinky), Miss C. Chapman; *Broom-Girls*, by ladies of the company, who will brush up their wardrobe for the occasion." This trifle was received with hearty laughter by a discerning portion of the auditors, consisting principally of play-actors, newspaper reporters, and old lobby-loungers; the remaining portion seeming not to comprehend its meaning. This piece was played four or five nights, and then was consigned to the "tomb of the Capulets," the fate of nearly all such trifles got up to serve some passing event.

April 1, 1843, was the benefit night of Miss Caroline Chapman, one of the most useful and versatile actresses, — such as are seldom met with — good in any character. She could perform any line of business respectably, and in certain characters could not be equalled by any other actress of the day. The performances of this night were: First, the drama entitled "Charles XII. of Sweden," in which Mr. C. A. Logan made his first appearance in this theatre in the character of *Adam Brock*,

Charles XII., Mr. Neafie; *Udega*, Miss C. Chapman. After which, a song by Miss T. Chapman, "Away to the Mountain's Brow," followed by a comic song by H. Chapman, "Nothing at All." The whole to conclude with the military drama entitled the "French Spy," in which Miss C. Chapman enacted three characters. The benefit was tolerably good, but not as great as such an actress deserved.

I desire to say something more here in regard to this lady, and the extraordinary family to which she belonged. I say *extraordinary*, for I never met with, in the profession of the stage, so many members of one family possessing such versatile and remarkable ability. They were all, I believe, born on British soil; the father at one time holding a very respectable position on one or another of the London stages. This gentleman's family, as I knew it in America, consisted of three sons and two daughters — Samuel, William, George, Caroline, and Theresa. I believe Mr. Samuel Chapman was the first of the family who came to the United States. This gentleman was considered, by good judges of acting, to possess considerable talent, and was a favorite with the Philadelphians, before whom most of his acting was done. It was there that he married Elizabeth Jefferson, daughter of the old favorite comedian of the Philadelphia stage; but by an accident he was killed in less than a year after his marriage. William Chapman was a comic actor of more than ordinary ability. George Chapman, as a melodramatic actor, was not bad; but Caroline possessed more stage ability than any other member of this singularly gifted family. The father of this family I never saw act, but he was at one time in London considered an excellent actor.

My first knowledge of this family was, if my recollection be correct, about the year 1831 or 1832, when I beheld a large flat-boat, with a rude kind of house built upon it, having a ridge-roof, above which projected a staff with a flag attached, upon which was plainly visible the word "Theatre." This singular object attracted my attention as it was lying tied up at the landing in Cincinnati, and on my making inquiries in regard to it, I learned that it was used for a theatrical company, under the management of a Mr. Chapman, "floating down the ribber of de O-hi-ho," as the negro melody has it. They did not play while there, and I had not time to visit them when I saw the boat; and when I went to the landing for that purpose, they were gone. They were on their "winding way" South to New Orleans, and, as I heard afterwards, stopped at every town or village on the banks of the river

where they supposed they could get together a sufficient audience, and gave an entertainment at a small price of admission. Many are the laughable incidents that I have heard of their adventures, among them this: At one settlement on the Ohio where they stopped and performed, some young men complained of the price of admission, and seemed quite offended because they could not get in to see the show for a quarter of a dollar, the price being a half a dollar for adults. However, they did not go away, but remained around on the shore, in hopes of seeing or hearing something without paying for it. Finding this could not be accomplished, they took an occasion when the performance was proceeding, and the audience seemed to be highly diverted, to quietly cast the boat from its moorings, and before actors or audience were aware of the situation, they were "out and gone," as they say in the West. The stream had carried them more than a mile before they got to the shore again, and then the performance was concluded; the delighted audience trudging their way home in the best way they could, laughing alternately at the incidents of the performance they had witnessed, and at the sly trick played upon them by the young rascals at the landing above.

In a few years after the commencement of their floating expeditions, the Messrs. Chapman purchased a steamboat, which they fitted up very comfortably, after the fashion of a theatre, and placed on board a pilot, engineers, and deckhands; they navigated their way at pleasure, down and up the rivers of the West, playing at all the towns adjacent. I will add a few more lines biographical, and then I have done with this family.

William Chapman, Sr., made his first appearance in America at the Bowery Theatre, as *Iago*, in "Othello," October 22, 1828. After many years of acting, principally in the West and in his floating theatre, he died at Cincinnati in the year 1840.

William B. Chapman, son of the above, was born in England, in the year 1799; came to America with his father and family in 1827; made his first appearance at the Bowery Theatre, New York, September 13, 1827, as *Billy Lackaday*, in "Sweethearts and Wives," and *Crack*, in the "Turnpike Gate." He went to California in 1852, taking with him his sisters, Caroline and Theresa, and his brother George. He died at San Francisco, November, 1857, aged fifty-eight years.

Miss Caroline Chapman was born in England, I believe, about the year 1818, for she appeared to be about twenty-five

years of age when with Ludlow & Smith in the St. Charles Theatre, New Orleans, 1843. She got her early training performing in her father's floating theatre on the Western waters, and excellent training it proved to be; she has never been equalled in versatility and finish, in her lines of business by any lady that has appeared upon the stages of America, excepting only Clara Fisher and Mrs. Fitzwilliam. She performed in New York in 1842, with great success; was in the South in 1843; returned to New York during the summer of the same year; left there for California in 1852; played there eight years, as a great favorite; returned to New York in 1860, since which time I am not able to trace her movements.

On the 11th of April was performed Shakespeare's historical tragedy of "*King John*," for the benefit of Mr. Ben DeBar, the following being the cast of a few of the characters: *King John*, Mr. Neafie; *Falconbridge*, Mr. DeBar; *Hubert*, Mr. Farren; *Prince Arthur*, Miss C. Chapman; *Lady Constance*, Mrs. Farren; *Queen Eleanor*, Mrs. Russell; *Blanche of Navarre*, Mrs. Warren. After the tragedy, the burletta of "*Buy it, Dear!*" The whole concluding with the farce of the "*Artful Dodger*:" *Timothy Dodger*, Mr. DeBar. The receipts were good, for the times.

About this time, Mr. J. M. Field produced a dramatic sketch entitled "*Dr. Heavy Bevy*," intended as a bit at the matter and manner of Dr. Lardner's astronomical lectures. This trifle was well received, and created a large amount of merriment. The following is a copy of the small house-bill:—

Dr. Heavy Bevy will appear and deliver a lecture on Theatrics, illustrated by grand telescopic drawings. Ligitimatics! Pirouettics!! Gagicss!!! Nebular and stellar clusters! This part will be illustrated by a large telescopic drawing of the Theatric Heavens, accompanied by a speculation upon cometary influence and the probabilities of a collision. Stars! Double stars!! Clusters!!! Colored stars!!!! All taken from original drawings by eminent observers.

On April 15th was produced another hit from the pen of Mr. J. M. Field, equally successful with the one just described. I give also a copy of the bill of advertisement:—

1943; OR, NEW ORLEANS A CENTURY HENCE.

<i>Manager</i>	Mr. J. M. Field.
<i>Oldest Inhabitant</i>	Logan.
<i>Destiny</i>	Eddy.
<i>Mr. Beheard</i> (an auctioneer)	W. Chapman.
<i>Time</i>	Bingham.
<i>Sam Patch</i>	H. Chapman.
<i>Jones</i>	DeBar.
<i>Fancy</i>	Miss C. Chapman.

<i>Hopkins</i>	Lake.
<i>Mr. Public</i>	Farren.
<i>1st Old Bachelor</i>	Newton.
<i>2d Old Bachelor</i>	Hamilton.
<i>Negro</i>	Burns.
<i>Doctor Polly Hopkins</i>	Mrs. Warren.
<i>Judge Sally Jones</i>	Eddy.
<i>General Small</i>	Miss Logan.
<i>Major Nellie Smith</i>	Mrs. Russell.
<i>Captain Hannah Tompkins</i>	Newton.

Mermaids, all the ladies.

Programme: Scene 1—Hall of Destiny; *Fancy* prevails on *Time* to go ahead one hundred years, for the benefit of the *Manager*.

“Vanish, then, an hundred years;
See the coming age appears.”

Scene 2—A room in the theatre; the *Manager* in search of novelty; *Mr. Public* gives a patronizing call; *Fancy* takes the *Manager* under her protection, and carries him into the next century. Scene 3—A lounging-room; New Orleans in 1943; the ladies in power; great political excitement among the dames and dummies; canvassing for the office of mayor; to the polls; *Judge Sally Jones* the candidate of the dames; men in petticoats; women in trousers; auction of old bachelors; *Mr. Beheard*, auctioneer. Scene 4—A street; ballooning and aerostating; the *Manager* has an interview with the *Oldest Inhabitant*; news a century old; amalgamation practically illustrated. Scene 5—The mermaid's cave; mermaids swimming; *Sam Patch* alive and married; *Manager* bobbing for mermaids; catches one. Scene 6—A room in the theatre; return of the *Manager* with his prize; by the aid of *Fancy*, a tableau exhibited representing the trial-scene of *Queen Katharine*, in “*Henry VIII.*”

On the 25th of April a benefit was given to the female orphan asylum of the city, when the following entertainment was presented: “The Wandering Boys,” an interesting melodrama: *Paul* and *Justin* (the wandering boys), Miss C. Chapman and Miss Eliza Logan; *Count de Croissy*, Mr. Neafie. Then came a dance by Miss Mary Ann Lee, called *Jaleo de Xeres*. After which the comic opera of the “Spoiled Child:” *Old Pickle*, Mr. C. A. Logan; *Little Pickle*, Miss E. Logan; *Tag*, Mr. J. M. Field; *Miss Pickle*, Mrs. Russell; the whole concluding with the burletta of “Buy it, Dear.” This night gave the orphans a nice little sum of money, and it was the last night of our regular season. A large portion of the company now left for St. Louis under the direction of N. M. Ludlow, Mr. S. Smith remaining with a smaller portion of the company, and performing about two weeks. During this after-season Mr. J. H. Kirby performed a few nights, but did not attract, and the theatre closed on the 7th of May for the season.

Our profits were not great during this season, but we contrived out of it to pay some portion of the debt incurred in the erection of the new St. Charles Theatre.

During the early weeks of the year 1843, the American Theatre, Poydras Street, was opened and closed several times,

under the management of different persons, none of them proving successful. A portion of the company that had been engaged by Mr. Caldwell for the opening of that house were sent by him to Mobile, where his theatre in that city had been opened ostensibly under the management of Mr. De Vendel and a Mr. Dumas. The former was vice-president of the Gas Company of Mobile, Mr. Caldwell being the owner of those works; the latter, Mr. Dumas, was proprietor of a restaurant, an eating and drinking house, opposite to the theatre. Mr. De Vendel, it was understood, represented Mr. Caldwell's interest in the theatre as well as in the gas-works, and had the handling of the receipts, or, in other words, was the cashier of both concerns, theatre and gas-works. Mr. Hodges, a vocalist, was engaged as stage-manager. Mr. Hodges was not well adapted for the position, it requiring more activity and more unremitting attention than any other office about a theatre. Mr. Hodges had been used to a life of ease, and was from the force of habit indolent, so he turned over many of the duties appertaining to his office to his prompter. The latter, not liking the idea of performing the work for which another man was paid, did not trouble his head much about said duties, and the result was those duties were not performed at all.

April, 1843, the St. Louis Theatre was sold under a deed of trust for \$20,000, being a sum borrowed in 1837 to pay the cost of doing the work of the building so far as to allow it to be opened for business, though not enough to finish it entirely in accordance with its design. The property was bought by Mr. George Collier, of St. Louis, for the amount of the debt; property that had cost the stockholders \$78,000. By this sale Ludlow & Smith lost \$7,000, the amount of the stock held by them. An effort was made by me, prior to the sale, to induce the largest holders of stock to increase their amount so far as to raise the mortgage-money, but my efforts were not successful. Subsequent to the sale, about the 1st of May, I received a proposition from Mr. Collier to this effect, viz.: He proposed that a company of twenty persons (or less number) take stock to the amount of \$20,000 (being the amount of the loan), become personally bound to him for the amount of their subscription, pay ten per cent of their subscription *annually*, bind themselves to keep the property *insured*, and pay the interest on the loan at ten per cent per annum. We, Ludlow & Smith, would give \$3,000 per annum rent, which would pay interest, insurance, taxes, and repairs, for five years. They, the stockholders, would only have to pay \$100 per

annum on every \$1,000 subscribed, for ten years. Under this proposition only \$3,000 was offered toward the object in question, from the following parties; Gen. Bernard Pratt, Sr., James Clemens, Jr., and Ludlow & Smith, each \$1,000; and so the project failed. The house was then rented of Mr. Collier by Ludlow & Smith, at \$3,000 per annum.

On the 2d of May, my son-in-law, Mr. M. C. Field, started for Independence, or Westport, to join the party of Sir William Gordon Stuart, of England, in a journey to the Rocky Mountains. The following gentlemen started the same day with Mr. Field, to join the party of Sir William: Mr. G. W. Christy and Mr. Hepburn, from Louisiana; Mr. Jefferson Clark, Mr. William C. Kennett, Mr. John Radford, and Mr. Leonidas Walker, of Missouri; a Mr. Battelle, a Mr. Power, and others, names unknown to me. This party all returned again in about five months, highly pleased with their journey and improved in health.

The St. Louis spring season of 1843 commenced on the 20th of May, with the comedy of the "Honeymoon," and the "Actress of Allwork:" Miss C. Chapman in the *Actress*. Receipts of the night a trifle over \$150. There was a large mass-meeting at the court-house, which doubtless kept many persons from going to the theatre; they preferred amusement that cost nothing.

Miss Caroline Chapman played with us as a "star" for about two weeks, taking a benefit on her last night. This last night of hers was given to a house tolerably well filled; indeed, it might be said to be a good house, considering the times. This excellent actress, although pleasing highly those who witnessed her acting, could not draw full houses, owing to the general stagnation existing at the time.

On the 21st of May, the old Louisville Theatre was burned down, just after midnight. The stage of this theatre was the field of some of my earliest efforts as an actor, and I must say that I heard of its destruction with feelings of regret, intensified by knowing it was owned by my old manager, Samuel Drake, Sr., and that he had no insurance on the property, in which he had invested most of his hard earnings of years. He was now an old man, and it was almost certain he could never regain the heavy amount he had lost. The poor old man very soon after doffed his managerial crown, laid aside his histrionic robes, and, like another Cincinnatus, retired to his farm. Some few years prior to this misfortune he had purchased a small farm and house, a few miles above Louisville, on the banks of the Ohio River; and there it was that he

ended his days, in quiet seclusion, in the year 1854. This farm was at times the home of some of his children and grandchildren, among whom is Mrs. Henry Chapman, who followed the profession of her grandfather. The homestead belongs at present, I believe, to his grandson, Samuel Drake, — that is, the *land*, but the dwelling was, as I have understood, recently destroyed by fire; whether another dwelling has been erected since, I am unable to say.

From a paragraph which I cut from a Pittsburg newspaper, I learn that Charles H. Eaton died in that city on the 5th of June, 1843, from the effects of a fall from a high gallery the day before. It was only four or five years previous he performed an engagement with us at St. Louis, and I thought him then the most promising young tragedian of the day; but he was too fond of company and the “social glass,” — qualities that have been the ruin of hundreds of the most brilliant intellects, in various positions of life.

CHAPTER LIV.

Mrs. Shea engaged—Ben DeBar—William Chapman—Dr. Lardner—J. H. Caldwell offers Mobile Theatre to Ludlow & Smith—Author goes to New Orleans to arrange with Mr. Caldwell—Returns to St. Louis—Sol. Smith goes to New York—Miss E. Ince—Mrs. Brougham—Seguin Opera Troupe—Mueller & Place rent American Theatre, New Orleans—Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Field—Mrs. W. H. Smith—S. B. Stockwell, Scenic Artist—G. H. Barrett—Joshua Silsbee and Dan Marble—Marshal Bertrand—Company leave for New Orleans—St. Charles Season of 1843-4—Mr. and Mrs. Brougham—Henry Placide—Ole Bull—His Biography—Vieuxtemps—J. W. Wallack, Sr.—Mr. Macready frightened by Cholera—Arrives behind Time—Grand Galaxy of Stars—Edwin Forrest—Great Success—Mobile Season of 1843-4—Mrs. W. H. Smith—Mr. C. A. Logan—His Biography—Mr. Lennox—Mr. Burton—Biography of Mr. and Mrs. Brougham—Mr. H. Placide.

On the 6th of June I received a letter dated Montgomery, Alabama, from Mrs. Shea, *née* Blanche Kemble, desiring an engagement at our theatre. I made her an offer, which she accepted, came, and met death on the boards of the St. Louis stage, the account of which will be given hereafter.

About this time Otto Motty arrived in St. Louis, put up a large canvas tent, and gave the public "chariot-racing," what he termed "Olympic games;" but trying it for a few nights, and finding it did not pay, the fellow had the impudence to ask me to engage him. Retaining a vivid recollection of his conduct towards us under the management of my partner, while in Havana, about a year before, I quietly invited him, in a very marked and suggestive manner, to depart at once through the door he had come in at; and he did so.

On the 6th of June, Ben DeBar and Mr. William Chapman appeared, — the former for the first time this season, the latter for the first time in this theatre, — Mr. DeBar as *Robert Macaire*, Mr. Chapman as *Jaques Strop* and *Caleb Quotem*, in the farce of the "Review."

June 8th, arranged with Dr. Lardner to give his lectures on astronomy for a few nights, agreeing to share with him the receipts after \$50 per night charges, he to pay his own printing, which was generally an expense of considerable amount. His lectures were well attended, for the time, and I think he cleared some money during his stay in St. Louis. On June

10th, Mr. DeBar took his benefit, — “Guy Mannering” and “Artful Dodger;” receipts \$176.75.

June 15th, I received a letter from Mr. James H. Caldwell, offering us the Mobile theatre at a rent of \$3,500 per year, without the saloons. Here was a strange event in theatrical history. The crusher offering to rent his Mobile theatre to the crushees! However, Sol. Smith says in his book that Caldwell and himself were on very friendly terms after we opened the new St. Charles. Yes, upon as friendly terms as the monkey and the cat, when the former wished to use the paw of the latter to pull the hot chestnuts out of the fire. But the fact was this: Mr. C. was friendly because he desired to use Ludlow & Smith for his own interest's sake, and nothing more; and Ludlow & Smith were willing to rent his theatre because it suited their convenience in business, and nothing more. So, for the furtherance of this object, I left St. Louis on the 8th of June, on the steamer Aleck Scott, for New Orleans, where Mr. Caldwell resided, as I preferred settling the matter in a personal interview rather than by writing, postal communication being a tedious process then.

On the 22d of June, about midnight, I arrived at New Orleans; the next day called on Mr. Caldwell at his residence, and we agreed upon the conditions for a lease for one year from the 1st of August ensuing, the principal conditions being same as before stated. He wished the lease to be drawn by his attorney, Mr. West, who resided at Mobile. This was no inconvenience to me, for I desired to visit my family, who resided there. I started the same day for that city, arriving there on the 24th. This was a melancholy day for my family and myself, for it was the anniversary of the death of my youngest son, William, who was, when only ten years of age, drowned (on June 24, 1840) from on board a steamboat on which my wife and children had embarked at New Orleans for the purpose of joining me at St. Louis. It occurred in this wise: He was sitting on the bow of the boat, whittling a stick, when some one called out, “There’s Cairo!” One of the colored boys on the boat, who was standing on the upper deck, said he was just about to tell the lad he had better not sit there; but as “Cairo” was shouted out, he says the boy turned suddenly around to look up-stream, lost his balance, and fell over backward into the river. The man ran to the side of the boat, and saw him struck by the buckets of the wheel; he disappeared, and was seen no more. The boat was stopped instantly, a small boat with men sent down-stream, in hopes to see him

rise, and to rescue him ; but all in vain, he was seen no more. It was a heavy blow to me, and one that required years for me to recover from. He was my youngest son, and seemed more closely knit to my heart than any other of my children.

About the 6th of July, having closed my business in connection with the lease of the theatre, I started on my return to St. Louis, passing through New Orleans and taking a steamer for the former city, and arrived there on the 15th of the month. My partner, having awaited my return, started on the 22d for New York, with the view of making engagements for our three theatres, — New Orleans, Mobile, and St. Louis. This was a great point arrived at in our affairs, for it enabled us to offer engagements to “stars” for three different theatres at once. This secured to us the preference over others in the city of New Orleans, and gave us the control of the best talent of the day.

On the 17th of July, I received a letter from Mr. DeBar, dated at Cincinnati, saying he had, according to my instructions, engaged Mr. Thomas Placide for our theatres, as principal low comedian.

On the 20th instant, I made my first appearance on the stage since my return from the South, in the character of *Scamper*, in the “Promissory Note.”

July 21st, Miss Emma Ince had a benefit, having performed for a few nights as a danseuse. This was a pretty American girl, but not sufficiently clever in her profession to draw full houses. Her benefit was not good.

July 22d, first appearance of Mrs. Brougham in St. Louis. *Lady Teazle*, in “School for Scandal ;” receipts only \$77.25. This lady was the first wife of Mr. John Brougham, the popular comedian and author of the present day.

July 24th, the Seguin Opera Troupe, highly popular in that day, commenced an engagement for a certain number of nights with “La Sonnambula ;” receipts only \$159.50. This company, although limited, was good ; and what they undertook was given in a very clever and artistic manner, and at any other time would have drawn houses that would have put money into their and the managers’ pockets ; but as it was, both parties lost money. Paid Seguin for six nights \$356.50, Ludlow & Smith getting for the same number of nights \$26 over their actual expenses.

Seventh night, the “Postillion of Longjumeau,” for the benefit of Mr. Shrivall. Tenth night, Mrs. Seguin’s benefit, “La Gazza Ladra” and “Olympic Revels.” Paid Seguin for the last six nights \$445.60, and Mr. Thomas Archer’s

salary, \$20 more. Out of this engagement of two weeks, Ludlow & Smith did not get their actual expenses. On the 12th of August, benefit of the managers being put up, the Seguins volunteered. Learned from Mr. Seguin that he and his company were engaged the coming season in New Orleans to perform at the American Theatre, Poydras Street, which was to be opened under the management of Mueller & Place. Mr. Charles H. Mueller was leader of our orchestra the year before, and Mr. Robert L. Place a clerk for Messrs. DuBois & Kendig, livery-stable. Mr. Mueller was a good musician, and knew more of melody than he did of Melpomene, and Mr. Place knew more of *menagement* than he did of management, and the result of their experiment was the loss of their money.

After the Seguins left, having very little attraction to offer the public, save what might be in our stock company, and that did not seem to draw, I gave three or four benefits and closed the spring season. About this time, concluded engagements with Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Field and Mrs. W. H. Smith, the latter a sister of Mrs. Field; also engaged Mr. S. B. Stockwell as scenic artist for Mobile.

Our fall season commenced September 2d, with the melodrama of the "Wandering Boys" and the farce of "Alive and Merry." The hottest night of the season — thermometer ninety-five in the shade during the day. September 4th, second night of the fall season, the pantomimists, Messrs. Davis, Brown, and La Petite Carline. Our entire receipts for the week of the pantomimists was only \$418.25. Miserable business; nothing seemed to draw. 11th — My partner returned from the East, having engaged Mr. Forrest, Mr. Henry Placide, and Mr. and Mrs. Brougham as "stars" for our three theatres; and also engaged some performers as "stock actors."

September 13th, engaged Mr. George H. Barrett for six to nine nights. He performed *Vapid*, in "The Dramatist," on his first night.

September 16th, we received a letter from Mr. A. J. Ballard, Louisville, Kentucky, declining the proposal we had made to the stockholders of a new theatre contemplated to be built in that city. The erection of this theatre having been commenced, had stopped for lack of funds necessary to the continuation of the work. We made a proposal to them for a lease of the building, provided it was finished by a certain date; but the stockholders being unwilling to invest any more money in it, nothing further was done by us in the premises.

I believe some few years afterwards the building was finished.

September 21st, Mr. Joshua Silsbee made his first appearance before a St. Louis audience. Mr. Silsbee was one among the popular representatives of Yankee characters. Mr. Dan Marble and Mr. Silsbee, both representatives of Yankee characters, arrived in the city about the same time; both came unexpectedly, and both wished to perform in our theatre. All we could do was to give them alternate nights. The style of representing the genus "Yankee" was quite different with these two gentlemen, and it was very amusing to notice this difference. Mr. Marble made his first appearance on the night of the 22d of September.

On that same night, Marshal Bertrand, one of the generals of the first Napoleon, attended the theatre by our invitation, and he appeared much amused with the performance of Marble. He remarked to a gentleman sitting with him, that "the character represented by Mr. Marble was, as he supposed, a class of Americans he had yet to meet with." The gentleman replied that "they were more generally to be seen in the Eastern States." The curiosity of our American people is very great! They will go to a theatre to see a live marshal, when they will not go to see a good performance.

On September 25th was performed a new drama, entitled "Redwood," founded on a novel of that name. Silsbee and Marble both appeared this night, but they could not make it a success.

September 26th, a play was performed, written by Major M. M. Noah, of New York, entitled "The Plains of Chipéwa," after which a farce called "Speculation;" Mr. Marble acting in the first and Mr. Silsbee in the last piece.

September 28th, Mr. Silsbee's benefit, consisting of acts from sundry pieces.

September 29th, Mr. Marble's benefit; acts from various pieces.

Of the month of October ensuing I shall say but little, having been deprived, by accident, of my diary for this month; but, to the best of my recollection, it was only a repetition of the bad business of the former months. I do not remember our having any "stars" of consequence during October; and our fall season in St. Louis closed with that month, leaving us minus several hundreds of dollars.

On November 1st, I embarked with my company on the steamer Caspian, Capt. Freeland, for New Orleans. On the same boat with me went Mr. and Mrs. Brougham, Mrs. W.

H. Smith, and Mr. M. C. Field, the latter having just returned from his trip to the Rocky Mountains.

We arrived in New Orleans, after a pleasant passage, on the 7th of November, and I found that the improvements in the St. Charles Theatre had not been completed, and saw with regret that the opening of that theatre must be deferred for at least a couple of weeks. Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Field had arrived by sea from New York, and were ready to begin their engagement.

It had been previously determined between my partner and myself that I should manage the Mobile theatre, that city being the place of my family residence, affording me by this course an opportunity of being with them five or six months in the year; Mr. Smith's family residing in St. Louis, it would be rather more convenient for him to be in New Orleans. By this arrangement, both would be located to their best convenience.

On the day following my arrival in New Orleans, leaving my partner to attend to the business in that city, I started with my company for Mobile, where we all arrived the next day.

The new St. Charles Theatre opened for its second season November 15, 1843, with the play of the "Hunchback" and the farce of "A Roland for an Oliver." Mr. J. M. Field as *Sir Thomas Clifford*, and his wife as *Julia*; Mr. Thomas Placide in the farce as *Fixture*, Mr. Field as *Highflyer*. Mr. John Brougham appeared, and made a good impression; his second night, Mrs. Brougham also acted.

Shortly after, Mr. Henry Placide made his first appearance in New Orleans. Mr. Placide made a great impression on his audience in his representation of *Grandfather Whitehead*, and while he repeated it the receipts were better than those of any other of his nights; and in previous or later years such fine and artistic acting would have filled the theatre for many nights. It was a masterly specimen of acting, and is fixed in my memory among the great gems of histrionic art with which I have met in my long acquaintance with the Drama.

About this time, Ole Bull, the great Norwegian violinist, made his appearance in New Orleans, where music was more highly appreciated, perhaps, than in any other city of the United States. Paganini had made all Europe music-mad with the flourishes of his fiddle-bow, and Ole Bull was about to produce a no less effect upon the people of America. He appeared in the St. Charles Theatre, to the following receipts: \$1,103, \$1,209, \$883, \$953. The reputation of this great violinist had preceded him, hence the immense increase of the

receipts of the theatre. The reader may desire to learn something more of this excellent artist and amiable gentleman. I subjoin the following account of him : —

Ole Bornemann Bull, the great violinist, was born at Bergen, Norway, February 5, 1810. At twenty years of age he commenced his public career as a violinist. He first appeared in America at the Park Theatre, New York, in a "concerto," November 25, 1843. His reception was most enthusiastic. He came to the South in 1843-4. His success in the United States was *immense*, in money and applause.

Directly after the appearance of Mr. Ole Bull, another great violinist presented himself before the music-loving people of New Orleans. This was a Frenchman, who styled himself *Vieuxtemps*; a most excellent musician, and of great reputation in Europe. This gentleman was thought by many connoisseurs in music to possess quite as much skill and more real science than Mr. Bull; but he was not as successful in drawing audiences. Why it was so, was not easy to understand; but I think there is no reason to doubt what I heard at the time, that the Frenchman's success was not equal to that of the Norwegian. As a proof of this, the former did not return to the United States after leaving them, and the latter *did* several times.

Mr. James W. Wallack, Sr., arrived in New Orleans and performed four nights; and the receipts not meeting his expectations, he declined playing any longer there, and left for the East, *via* Mobile.

Mr. Macready, the English tragedian, had been engaged to appear at the St. Charles Theatre early in January. He started South in due time, and got as far as Charleston, when he heard, as he wrote to us, that the cholera was existing to a frightful degree in New Orleans, and he could not visit that city until it had disappeared and the atmosphere become once more healthy. He did not reach New Orleans until early in February, and commenced his engagement on the 7th of that month, in the character of *Hamlet*, to a house of \$822. On the 9th he enacted *Macbeth*, to receipts of \$855. He performed only three nights of each week, the other nights being filled by Mr. James H. Hackett and Mr. Henry Placide, playing alternately, and sometimes both on the same evening; but the nights of the latter were but indifferently attended, although both were masters in their peculiar lines of the Drama.

Mr. Macready's engagement in New Orleans was undoubtedly a success, considering the depressed condition of the

public mind and the public purse. Directly after Mr. Macready came Mr. Edwin Forrest, the American tragedian, performing about the same number of nights, and to an average of receipts somewhat greater; this gentleman's first night of the "Gladiator" and of "Metamora" reaching nearly eleven hundred dollars each, and his benefit night nearly twelve hundred dollars. These gentlemen both went to Mobile and performed after their New Orleans engagement, and each returned and played in that city.

Our first Mobile season in the theatre of Mr. Caldwell commenced on the 18th of November, 1843. This building was erected on the north-west corner of Royal and St. Michael Streets. It was built of brick, presenting a very rough exterior, and an interior but very plainly finished. It had three tiers of seats and a pit, and would seat about nine hundred people. The building was destroyed by fire in March, 1860. On our opening night of this season we commenced with James Sheridan Knowles's play of "The Wife, or A Tale of Mantua," with Mr. Neafie as *St. Pierre* and Mrs. Stuart as *Marianna*; followed by the comic opera entitled "Sprigs of Laurel." The next night was the first night of Mrs. W. H. Smith, the performance being the comedy of "The Wonder — A Woman Keeps a Secret:" *Donna Violante*, Mrs. W. H. Smith; after which the farce of "A Pleasant Neighbor." November 21st was performed Knowles's play of the "Hunchback," in which Mrs. Stuart played *Julia*, and Mrs. W. H. Smith, *Helen*; after which the vaudeville of "The Swiss Cottage:" *Lisette*, Mrs. W. H. Smith. Here was a most excellent night's entertainment, with the principal characters filled with performers of no inconsiderable merit; a clear and pleasant night, and the gross receipts about one-half of the actual expenses of the night. On the 23d, Mr. C. A. Logan made his first appearance as *Sir Solomon Cynic*, in the comedy of "The Will," with Mrs. W. H. Smith, in *Albina Mandeville*; with the farce of "The Promissory Note." November 25th, the comedy of "The Soldier's Daughter:" *Governor Heartall*, Mr. Logan; *Widow Cheerly*, Mrs. W. H. Smith; with the farce of "Simpson & Co.:" *Mr. Peter Simpson*, Mr. Logan; *Mrs. Simpson*, Mrs. Stuart. November 27th was performed the comedy of "Man and Wife, or More Secrets than One:" *Sir Willoughby Worret*, Mr. Logan; *Helen Worret*, Mrs. W. H. Smith; the same night being for the benefit of this lady. Such plays and such acting, to pitiful remuneration! November 28th was performed Shakespeare's "Henry IV.," with Mr. Logan as *Sir John Falstaff*. As

Mr. Logan was a favorite actor in the South and West, I sub-join a short sketch of his life:—

Cornelius A. Logan was born in Baltimore, Maryland, and first appeared upon the stage at Tivoli Garden, Philadelphia, 1825, as *Bertram*. He had been manager of several theatres, and as a comedian obtained considerable celebrity at the West. He appeared in New York at Burton's, May, 1849, as *Aminidab Slocum*, in a farce called "Chloroform," of which, we believe, he was the author; likewise, "Yankee Land," "Vermont Wool-Dealer," and other dramas. He died of apoplexy, February 23, 1853, while on board of a steamboat on the Ohio River. His daughters—Eliza, Olive, and Celia—have since been well known at the South and West, and have occasionally appeared in New York. (So much from Mr. Ireland.) I was told that Logan was a printer by trade, and that at one period of his life he had undertaken to study for the priesthood of the Roman Catholic Church. He was a man of letters, and, I believe, a good Latin scholar; and if he had persevered in this intention which it was said he once entertained, would have made a good priest. The church certainly lost a promising aid when Cornelius Logan resolved to become a play-actor. If he had persevered in his pious intentions, he might have been canonized instead of being stigmatized by the church.

Mrs. Logan, wife of the above, died at Philadelphia, May 14, 1875.

December 2d, Mr. and Mrs. Brougham commenced their engagement with "The Youthful Queen," which introduced Mrs. Brougham in the young queen *Christina*, in which she was rather coldly received. Mr. B. appeared as *Sir Patrick O'Plenipo, the Irish Ambassador*, and *Tim Moore*, in the "Irish Lion." Mr. Brougham was very enthusiastically received by the Mobile public.

December 6th, a Mr. Lennox, a rather clever actor in Scottish characters, made his appearance in a drama called "Cramond Brig," and Mr. and Mrs. Brougham in one of their pieces,—three "stars" in one night. It rained all day and all night, as though the "windows of heaven were all open." Friday, 8th of December, Mrs. Brougham's benefit, "Love's Sacrifice" and "Born to Good Luck." December 9th, third night of Mr. Lennox, Mr. L. as *Nicol Jarvie*, in "Rob Roy;" after it "Our Irish Friend," for Mr. Brougham's benefit.

On the 14th of December, Mr. William E. Burton arrived in Mobile, with the view of playing in a large room fitted up

for theatrical exhibitions, and called the Corinthian Hall Theatre. He was sent by Messrs. Mueller & Place, managers of the American Theatre, with a small company to support him; but the expedition proved to be a failure, and Mr. Burton returned to New Orleans a wiser, but not a richer man.

December 15th, Mr. Brougham's benefit, "Mysteries of Paris" and "Married Rake." Engaged Mr. Brougham, without his wife, to return to New Orleans and perform five nights. As I shall not have occasion to speak of Mr. and Mrs. Brougham again in this book, I here add a short biographical sketch of them:—

Mr. and Mrs. Brougham (this was Mrs. B. No. 1) made their first appearance in America at the Park Theatre, October 4, 1842, Mrs. B. as *Lady Teazle*, and Mr. B. as *O'Callaghan*, in "His Last Legs." Mrs. B. was known in London as Miss Emma Williams, and was noted as a beauty; but with a moderate share of talent and a considerable share of temper. Mr. and Mrs. B. separated in 1845, and she returned to England. (She remained there for many years, yet returned and appeared at the Broadway Theatre in 1852.) She played in New York again in 1859, as Mrs. Robertson. She died in New York, June 30, 1865.

Mr. Brougham was born in 1814; first attempted the stage in 1830, in a small theatre of London. The Broadway Lyceum (afterwards Wallack's) was built for him in 1850, but it was not a success in his hands. He is the author of many very clever dramatic productions, many of which occupy the stage at the present day. He is said to have been a coadjutor with Boucicault in the production of the play of "London Assurance." Mr. Brougham is still living.

December 18th, Mr. Henry Placide appeared for the first time in Mobile in *Grandfather Whitehead*, and I thought it the best representation of a feeble old man that I had seen on the stage since the days of the great tragedian, George Frederick Cooke. December 19th, Mr. Placide's second night, "Grandfather Whitehead," "Nabob for an Hour," and "Dumb Bells;" Mr. P. in the first two pieces. December 23d was the benefit night of Mr. H. Placide, when was played "Promissory Note," "The Village Doctor," and "Grandfather Whitehead." The largest collection of ladies among the audience since we began.

December 26th, Mr. Placide's reëngagement commenced with *Sir Harcourt Courtly*, in "London Assurance." December 27th, repeated "London Assurance," and finished with singing by a troop calling themselves the Virginia Minstrels. This

singing was very good. December 28th, third night of "London Assurance" and the minstrels. December 29th, the fifth representation of "Grandfather Whitehead," concluding with the minstrels. December 30th, Mr. Placide's second benefit, when was performed two acts of "London Assurance," "Secret Service," and "The Anatomist." Receipts, \$206.25.

This most excellent artist left Mobile for New Orleans not very favorably impressed with the little Bay City.

CHAPTER LV.

January 1, 1844, Cowbellians attend Theatre—Origin of Society—Virginia Minstrels—Mr. Silsbee—J. W. Wallack, Sr.—His Biography—Biography of Mr. Silsbee—Ole Bull's First Appearance in Mobile—Mr. Schaffer and Animals—"Lady of Lions"—Seguin Opera Troupe—Mr. Hackett—Hon. Henry Clay attends Theatre—Arrival of Mr. Macready—His Indignation—Mr. Macready's Acting.

MONDAY, January 1, 1844, a society that styled itself the "Mobile Cowbellians," visited the theatre in their peculiar costumes. This society was then, and has been for over fifty years, confined to the city of Mobile. The society has but one public celebration in each year, which takes place on the night of the last day of the year, except when that night happens to fall on a Sunday; then it is celebrated the following night, as it was in this instance.

It commenced its existence about the year 1824 or 1825, with a party of young men out on a midnight frolic the last day of the year. The moving spirit of that party was a gentleman named Michael Kraft, who had but one eye, the other having been put out by accident; but he had an abundant stock of wit and fun in his composition, and a large share of the milk of human kindness. On their way home from a social party on the night referred to, Mr. Kraft found a cow-bell in his path, while crossing one of the streets; this he took up, and placing himself at the head of the party, commenced ringing the cow-bell as he marched along. As the party was passing through a lonely and silent street, a light was seen glimmering from the small window of an humble dwelling. As they reached the door of this house, a female form appeared at the door, attracted by the sound of the cow-bell. Mr. Kraft, who had a heart always alive to the call of charity, and an eye—yes, only an eye—quick to perceive distress, stopped, and peering with that one eye into that desolate dwelling, beheld two sick children upon a poor but clean bed; and on questioning the woman, found she was in great need of help, having no physician, nor money to procure medicine, or other means necessary for the suffering family. A subscription was at once raised among the party, and means taken the next day for further aid by this party of gentlemen.

These gentlemen banded together afterwards and formed a mysterious society, calling themselves Cowbellians; and from this beginning has sprung a society that numbers among its members men whose combined efforts are to cheer the lowly, help the widow, and protect the orphan. This society is a very mysterious one; they parade in public but once in a year; their place of meeting is a profound secret; it is not known whence they come, or where they go to when their revelry is over; and it is seldom known who are its members. In some of their parades they have represented personages from the heathen mythology; sometimes the historical characters of a particular country, and well-known historical characters of various nations. The original number of the "Revellers," for such they styled themselves at first, consisted of seven persons, whose names, if my recollection be correct, were Michael Kraft, Thomas Niles, Henry Daggett, Robert Roberts, Richard Corrie, Nathaniel Ledyard, and Samuel Kipp. After the night's adventure above related, they changed their title to that of "Cowbellians," and organized for purposes of charity.

The receipts of the theatre on the night of January 1, 1844, were \$343.75; the Cowbellians attending by invitation of the management, the entire parquet being reserved for their accommodation.

January 2d, the Virginia Minstrels' benefit. On this night the Seguin Opera Troupe commenced at the Corinthian Hall Theatre with "La Sonnambula," to about one hundred dollars receipts.

January 3d, first night of J. S. Silsbee, the Yankee comedian. This night the opposition, the opera troupe at the Corinthian, had a good house, — much better than ours.

January 4th, Silsbee in a Yankee drama, and first night of the Herculean Brothers' gymnastic feats.

On the 6th of January, the danseuse Miss Mary Ann Lee began with us for six nights.

January 8th, fifth night of Silsbee; first appearance of Miss Randolph; Miss Lee dancing.

January 10th. Mr. Silsbee's engagement proved a failure, he having in no instance the expenses of the night in the theatre, although backed up with other persons. On his benefit night he got half the receipts, leaving the management minus at least one hundred dollars.

As this is probably the only occasion I shall have to speak of Mr. Silsbee, and as he was well known and liked in his peculiar line of business, not only in the South and West, but

throughout the entire United States, I will here add a short biography of him : —

Joshua S. Silsbee was a native of Steuben County, New York, born December 1, 1813. He did not attempt the stage until nearly twenty-five years of age, when he engaged himself in an humble capacity at the Natchez Theatre. Removing to Cincinnati, he was there employed for fops and juvenile business, and in 1840, at a complimentary benefit to James M. Scott, volunteered a Yankee story, in which he was lucky enough to make a decided hit. He had appeared with applause in Boston and Philadelphia previous to his *début* in New York, which occurred on the 10th of June, 1843, at the new Chatham Theatre, then under the management of Charles R. Thorne. He afterwards "starred" successfully throughout the United States until 1850, when he visited England, and made his first appearance in London at the Adelphi Theatre, playing afterwards at the Haymarket and principal theatres of the United Kingdom with distinguished approbation. On returning to America he made his first appearance at the Broadway Theatre, August 13, 1853, commencing a brilliant career of success throughout the whole country, until, during an engagement at California, he was seized with illness, which terminated his existence in the month of December, 1855, at the age of forty-two years. So much for what Mr. Ireland says. *Tallis's Magazine* (English) says, in 1850, Mr. Silsbee being then playing in London: "His style of acting differs considerably from either Hill's or Marble's, and is indeed so far peculiar that it may be said to form a new and original school. Faithfully as he performs the Yankee character, his performances are permeated with the natural humor of the man. His looks, gestures, and actions, even the arch twinkle of his eye, impress the spectator with ludicrous emotions, and his inflexible countenance, rigidly innocent of fun while his audience are in roars of laughter, gives an additional zest to the humor of the language and the absurdity of the situation."

January 15, 1844. Mr. J. W. Wallack, Sr., commenced an engagement in Mobile in *Hamlet*. It rained hard all day, and Mr. Wallack wrote a note to me late in the afternoon, requesting me to excuse him from performing that night, as he was sure there would be no one in the theatre. I returned him an answer to the effect that I could not accede to his wishes, as it was too late to make a public announcement of a change, and there could be no reason assigned for a change but bad weather, and that would not be satisfactory. So he performed to \$243.50.

January 16th, benefit of Miss M. A. Lee.

January 18th, Mr. Wallack's third night, *Macbeth*; receipts \$212.25. January 19th, Mr. Wallack's fourth night, he played *Shylock*, in "Merchant of Venice," to \$199. January 22d, Mr. Wallack's benefit, receipts \$402. Mr. Wallack left Mobile next day, and returned to New Orleans.

Mr. James W. Wallack, Sr., although but little known in the South and West, yet as an actor, a manager, and a private gentleman, no man has been estimated above him by the citizens of the United States.

James W. Wallack, Sr., was born in London, August 24, 1794. He was reared on the stage, his father and mother being performers. His name first appeared on the play-bills on Easter Monday, 1798, at the opening of the Royal Circus, afterward the Surrey Theatre, in a drama entitled "Black Beard," he being then nearly four years of age. After the destruction of the old Drury Lane Theatre and the opening of the new one, Mr. Wallack appeared on the first night as *Laertes*. From this time he began to attract some notice as a promising young actor. Mr. Wallack attained his position as an actor by careful study and increasing cultivation of his powers. In Shakespeare's finest tragic parts he was probably inferior only to Cooper, Kean, Booth, or Forrest. It was remarked of him that he was first in his line, but that his line was not the first. In 1837, he became the manager of the National Theatre, New York. In 1839, after the burning of his theatre, he went home to England, but returned to the United States in 1843-4, and played at the Park Theatre. In 1852, he assumed the management of the Lyceum Theatre, New York. At the termination of his lease on this building, he erected a theatre at the corner of Broadway and Thirteenth Streets, New York, which was first opened on the 25th of September, 1861, and at the close of the season of 1862 he last appeared before the curtain to return his acknowledgments to his friends for their liberal patronage. He was for many years a sufferer from gout and asthma, diseases that finally caused his death, at his residence, New York, on the 26th of December, 1864, at the age of seventy years and four months. Mr. Wallack married, early in life, a daughter of the celebrated Irish comedian, Johnstone, of London, and she was the mother of John Lester Wallack, the present manager of Wallack's Theatre, New York, who was born in the United States in 1819; she died in New York in 1851. Mr. Wallack, Sr., made his first appearance in America at the Park Theatre, as *Macbeth*, on the 7th of September,

1818. In such parts as *Rolla*, *Rob Roy*, *Massaroni*, *Benedick*, *Martin Heywood*, *Walter* in "The Children of the Wood," *Dashall* in "My Aunt," and *Michael* in "Adopted Child," Mr. Wallack has never been equalled by any one in the United States.

January 23d, Mr. Henry Placide returned from New Orleans, where he had been playing another engagement, and commenced a second engagement in the Mobile Theatre.

January 25th, Mr. Silsbee returned and commenced another engagement on this night, Mr. H. Placide performing the same night.

January 26th, Mr. Ole Bull, the Norwegian violinist, made his first appearance in Mobile. There was a great demand for seats: prices raised to \$1.50 all over the house, except the private boxes; these were \$2 a ticket. House crammed; receipts \$819.25; his second night, \$489.50; his third night, \$582.

January 30th, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Field appeared in the comedy of "West End:" Mr. Placide, *Sir W. Daventry*; Mr. Field, *Percy Ardent*; Mrs. Field, *Norah O'Connor*; Mrs. Stuart, *Lady Daventry*. February 3d, Mr. Silsbee's benefit; H. Placide and Mr. and Mrs. Field playing. Mr. Silsbee's engagements proved to be entire failures. The people of Mobile did not like his Yankee as well as that of Mr. Marble. Monday, 5th, benefit of Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Field; receipts, \$489. February 6th, Mr. Placide's benefit and last appearance; "West End" and "Grandfather Whitehead," Mr. and Mrs. Field performing; receipts \$293. February 7th, finding bipeds did not draw, I had recourse to quadrupeds, and introduced a whole menagerie of them that was travelling around the country under the control of a Mr. Schaffer; Mr. John Sefton being his financial agent. With a banner on which was a lion, and a drummer to call attention to it, I contrived to draw a house of \$459.75. It was a *beastly* exhibition, and very repulsive to me. It disturbed my nervous system, and I dreamed all night of being devoured by wild beasts. The next morning, I was afraid to look a bust of Shakespeare in the face lest he should frown on me. Second night of the *beastly* exhibition, \$311.50. Third night, \$297. Fourth night of animals, a young lady arrived from New Orleans, and during the exhibition went into the lion's cage and seated herself on his back while he was lying down. She was called the "Lady of Lions." I think she had some Indian blood in her veins. She said she was reared in Florida. Receipts \$201. Second night of this young lady's lion-riding, receipts

\$149.50. On the 13th of February, Mr. Schaffer's benefit, we played "La Tour de Nesle," and afterwards a *beastly* piece called the "Lion of the Desert," the worst dramatic production I ever beheld; receipts \$274. February 14th, first appearance in Mobile of the Seguin Opera Troupe. The 19th, Mr. Shriver's benefit, \$363.25. The 20th, Mrs. Seguin's benefit, \$473.25; and the first night of Mr. J. H. Hackett, who commenced with *Falstaff*, in "Henry IV.," \$219. The 22d, Washington's Birthday, grand ball at the Armory Hall; Mr. Hackett in "Rip Van Winkle" and the "Kentuckian." Mr. Thomas Placide appeared here this night, for the first time in five years, in *Peter White*.

February 23d, Mr. Hackett acted *Falstaff*, in the "Merry Wives of Windsor." The 24th, Mr. Hackett's benefit; Mr. H. left next day for New Orleans. On this day, 25th of February, Hon. Henry Clay, the great American senator, arrived in Mobile and stopped with his friends Doctor and Madame Le Vert. The next day I was introduced to Mr. Clay at the Mansion House Hotel, by Col. Desha, of Mobile. I invited Mr. Clay to attend the theatre that night, and he did; the entertainments consisting of the "Heir at Law," in which I performed *Doctor Pangloss*; the evening concluding with the vaudeville of "The Swiss Cottage," Mr. T. Placide acting *Natz Tieck*. The 27th, a grand ball was given to Mr. Clay by the citizens of Mobile. On this night was produced, for the first time in Mobile, a play written for us by Mr. John Brougham, entitled the "Declaration of Independence," in which Mr. Brougham appeared; but in consequence of the great ball given to Mr. Clay, which was very generally attended, the receipts of the theatre were small.

February 29th, Mr. T. Placide had a benefit; receipts \$202.

March 1st was performed two dramatic sketches of Mr. Brougham's, one the "Mysteries of Paris," and the other the "Declaration of Independence." Sunday, March 3d, Mr. Macready arrived in Mobile and put up at the Mansion House Hotel, where I met him shortly after his arrival. I had met Mr. Macready a few days prior to this time on the stage of the St. Charles Theatre, where I was introduced to him by my partner, Mr. Smith, and saw him that night enact the part of *Iago*, in "Othello," and must say I was not pleased with his rendition of the character, having seen George Frederick Cooke and J. B. Booth both perform the part more in accordance with my ideas of it.

On the mail-boat that brought Mr. Macready to Mobile, I had put a letter into the hands of the steward, to be delivered

to Mr. M., suggesting that he had best stop at the Mansion House, as a hotel at which he would be most comfortable. I joined him there as soon as I heard of his arrival. Almost the first salutation from him was a lecture, delivered in his peculiar hesitating manner, about what he had observed on the theatre-bills posted up, on his way from the boat to his hotel. He began in a manner somewhat after this style: "Who is — a Mr. — a — Mr. Clay, that is announced to a — a — appear, at the a — theatre to night, and who a — is announced in large a — letters directly following my name?" To which I replied, "Surely, Mr. Macready, you must be aware who the Hon. Henry Clay is, if you read the poster; and your words imply that you did." To this he rejoined something in a kind of undertone, which I then understood to be that he did not know who Mr. Clay was. I then remarked that Mr. Clay was one of our most distinguished senators, and then a candidate for the presidency at the ensuing full election; and we Americans felt a pride in doing honor to our great men, even in this small degree. I added at the same time, I believed it was not unusual in his own country to announce in this way distinguished personages, whenever they attended the theatre on any particular occasion. He then said that, as we had agreed to give him half the receipts of each night, he presumed that we expected him to fill the theatre every night, and therefore he could not understand why we should wish to announce any further attraction. Finally, I said there was no doubt in my mind of his attraction, but it was simply my wish to honor a great man, and my course would certainly not keep money out of the house; on the contrary, I was credibly informed that Mr. Clay had expressed a desire to attend the theatre. It was the intention of Madame Le Vert to have given a large party at her house, when a number of the leading citizens would have been invited, and most probably attended her levee for the purpose of being introduced to Mr. Clay.

As it resulted, Mr. Macready opened to a crowded house of the refinement and beauty of Mobile, to receipts of \$833.75, on March 4, 1844, in *Hamlet*. Although the play was going off, as I supposed, excellently well, yet Mr. Macready sent for me at the end of the first act, requesting I would step to his dressing-room. I went there, and he commenced a tirade on the inadequacy of the company, and their neglect of the business of the play as laid down in his book. I told him that the play had been rehearsed three times, that I had attended to these rehearsals myself, and had been careful in pointing out to all performers in it the business as set down in the

marked book that had been given to me by him for that purpose. But he was not satisfied, and at the end of the second act he sent his man, Thompson, to summon me again to his presence. Not having been educated to that kind of managerial servility which perhaps Mr. Macready had found accorded him in his own country, I declined going to his room, and requested Thompson to say that I had business in my office to attend to, and that if Mr. Macready had any matter of importance to communicate, and would send it in writing, I would give it all due consideration. I never heard any more complaints from Mr. Macready that night, nor any night thereafter.

March 5th, Mr. Macready's second night, was performed Bulwer's "*Richelieu*;" receipts \$138. March 6th, Mr. Macready's third night, Knowles's tragedy of "*Virginus*;" receipts \$317. Rained all day. Mr. Macready's fourth night, a repetition of "*Richelieu*;" receipts \$316.50. Fifth night of Mr. Macready, the tragedy of "*Werner*;" receipts \$620.50. Monday 11th, Mr. Macready as *Macbeth*; receipts \$666. March 12th, Mr. Macready played *William Tell*; receipts \$269. March 13th, Mr. Macready played *Othello*; receipts \$475. March 14th, Mr. Ryder, the gentleman who travelled with Mr. Macready, and played as his assistant and support in certain characters, had a benefit; receipts \$159.50. March 15th, Mr. Macready's benefit; receipts \$464, — a poor benefit for so celebrated an actor. I did expect \$800. This was the last appearance of Mr. Macready in Mobile; he started the next day for New Orleans, where he again played a short engagement. At the conclusion of this engagement, we formed a company out of our two companies, with some additions, who were sent with Mr. Macready to perform in our theatre at St. Louis. After Mr. Macready's engagement in St. Louis, the same company went to Cincinnati, under the direction of my partner, where they performed in the National Theatre, which we rented for the occasion, of Mr. John Bates, of that city. In both of these cities we lost money by playing Mr. Macready. Before taking a final leave of this gentleman, I have much to say in regard to him; for this I shall make no excuse, as a man so eminent as he was deserves more than an ordinary notice.

I have never been able to determine, in my own mind, exactly what could have prompted Mr. Macready to place himself in such an unenviable position. Could he have been offended because Mr. Clay's name appeared on the bill underneath his own, and in type nearly or quite as large? Had I been conversing with a tyro in acting, or an actor of equivocal

position, I might have looked for some such objection ; but coming from Mr. Macready, an experienced actor, a man of undoubted position in the profession, I must say it greatly surprised me. It has always appeared to me that he unintentionally manifested on that occasion an estimate of his own importance that, in view of his distinguished position, had better been kept out of sight. Few men in these United States, or in Europe, acquainted with the exalted position occupied by the great statesman referred to, would have objected to having their names associated with that of Henry Clay. Mr. Macready assumed a vast amount of aristocratic importance, that I never could discover any excusable reason for. Had he required only a certain deference, due to what he might have considered his preëminence as an actor, I could have understood it as the result of personal vanity, and excused it as the common weakness of humanity ; but in all his relations with the world, judging by what I saw of him, and what I discover of his characteristics by reading his autobiography, he aimed to impress upon those with whom he might come in contact personally, or reach with his pen, a feeling of awe, a reverence for birth or lineage, such as we can understand might be attempted by one descended from a noble line of ancestors, though silly enough in such a one ; but with William Macready, the son of a strolling provincial theatrical manager, it was simply ridiculous. From his own account, his father and himself were generally upon unpleasant terms with each other, and I am not at all surprised at it ; the father, doubtless, was a plain, sensible man, and was disgusted with his son's supercilious assumptions.

I never met with a man so peculiar in his disposition and habits as William C. Macready. According to his own showing, he was continually finding fault with himself for his ill-temper, yet continually indulging in a display of it, even on the most trivial occasions. He must have been a very weak, irresolute man.

It is astonishing to me that a man of Mr. Macready's intellect, reflective habits, and strong will in other respects, could never subdue the irascibility of his nature to the control of his reason.

Mr. Macready, I should think, had started in his theatrical career with a desire to form a school of acting that should be known as his. In carrying out this idea, he endeavored to blend the dignity and grandeur of John P. Kemble with the impulsive action and fiery spirit of Edmund Kean. This, as I should have supposed, was an impossibility, and the re-

sult, of course, a total failure. I never saw Mr. Kemble act, but have had very minute descriptions of his manner, from persons competent to judge, and intimate with his style of acting. Nor did I ever see Mr. Edmund Kean but once, and that was with a cloud of dissipation hanging over him, which obscured his efforts so much that one could only see a reason for his great fame in the flashings of genius that occasionally broke through the density of the surrounding gloom, like the flashings from a thunder-cloud, leaving the darkness greater than before. I am persuaded in my own mind that, had there been another Englishman, with any originality of genius, that could have made his appearance on the London stage when Macready did, the latter gentleman would never have risen in public esteem beyond the limits of a provincial reputation.

To be candid, I must say I was disappointed; and this feeling was increased at every subsequent performance by him that I beheld. And after having been present many times during the exhibition of his principal and reputed best efforts, I came to the conclusion that, for a supposed great actor, he was much overrated.

I cannot account for the reputation attending Mr. Macready on his arrival in America, unless it arose from his close attention to the minutiae of what is technically termed "stage business," or grouping of characters connected with those performed by himself. And this he sometimes pushed to the extreme of absurdity, from whence arose, occasionally, very ridiculous *contretemps*. As an instance of this kind, I will relate an anecdote told me by an old actor, and said to have occurred at the time of Mr. Macready's last professional tour in America:—

Most actors in this country who may have performed in plays with the above-named gentleman, cannot but remember how anxious he was in regard to having those acting scenes with him to stand precisely at certain distances from him at particular times. This precision was supposed to be carried to unnecessary particularity by him; at least, so it was thought by many members of his profession. On one occasion, in a play the name of which I do not recollect, a certain young man, who the night before had disturbed Mr. Macready's calculations in trigonometry as usually illustrated in his acting, was told by that gentleman, "Now, sir, I wish you to observe, sir, that I desire that you stand precisely at this spot to-night." "Yes, sir," said the young man. At the same time taking from his pocket a piece of chalk, he made a mark on the stage floor just at the points of his own toes, and went

on rehearsing his part without any further comments from the great man. When night came, and the scene referred to was presented to the public, and the particular passage, the subject of the morning's remarks, arrived at, Mr. Macready was heard to say, in an undertone, "Come nearer, sir; come nearer!" To which the latter replied, in a firm tone, loud enough to be heard to the centre of the pit, "No, sir; I am standing on the mark!" at the same time looking down at the floor to be sure he was right. The audience appeared very much amused, 'twas said.

Mr. Addison, in an essay on the Pleasures of Imagination, in the *Spectator* (No. 414), makes the following remarks: "When we consider the works of nature and art, as they are qualified to entertain the imagination, we shall find the latter very defective in comparison of the former. There is something more bold and masterly in the rough and careless strokes of nature than in the nice touches and embellishments of art." Dr. Hugh Blair, in commenting on the latter sentence, says: "The strokes of nature are finely opposed to the touches of art, and the rough strokes to the nice touches; the former paint the freedom and ease of nature, and the other the diminutive exactness of art."

I am certainly aware that Mr. Addison's remarks are applied to the considerations of nature and art in their general sense, and not intended to refer to any particular form of their manifestations; and that Dr. Blair's comments have an especial reference to style of composition; nevertheless I consider the remarks of either or both writers equally applicable to stage-performances as to the operations of nature and art in any other way. Now, this diminutive exactness of art is, in my mind, a great fault when attached to histrionic exemplifications; I prefer rather the unrestrained actions of nature. Of the first, in its application to dramatic performances, we had an example in Mr. Macready; of the last, in Mr. Junius B. Booth. I have often thought there was in Mr. Macready a lack of animation, — a want of mental energy, — qualities, the absence of which would preclude any man from becoming a great actor. Although I am willing to admit that Mr. Macready might have been properly called *artistically* great, yet I am far from admitting him to have been a great histrionic artist. Art may polish up a very dull actor, and make him endurable, without his having one particle of sensibility in his composition; but art will not supply the absence of the divine afflatus of genius.

When I behold art, and nothing but art, in the pictures of

the histrion, I feel like exclaiming, with the *Queen* in "Hamlet," "More matter with less art!" especially when it is so profuse as to smother nature. I hold such to be *from* the purpose of playing, whose end, both at first and now was and is, "to hold as 'twere the mirror up to nature." I need not to be told that art is often of great service to nature. This is true, and it may be as truly said, that when filling the situation of an assistant, and not presuming to demand the position of a principal, her services become highly valuable; but whenever she assumes preëminence, and attempts to reduce nature to a servile condition, that moment she becomes a nuisance.

In my mind, the especial faults of Mr. Macready's acting were to be found in his peculiar and unnatural intonations of voice, and his affected, inflexible, and angular action, devoid of grace, spirit, or naturalness. Furthermore, I could never discover any original conceptions or strong delineations of character in the exercise of this gentleman's professional skill. There was a sameness of manner that became tiresome after having seen him act five or six different characters; and yet this was by his countrymen entitled the "Macready school" of acting. It might have been a school of art for Englishmen, who had become used to it,—habit will do much; but to Americans, who had been looking to nature, it did seem a little odd. The mirror held up to "nature" by Mr. Macready in this country showed some very strange and fantastic "features" and "images;" but perhaps the mirror had been injured by transportment to America,—*cracked*, possibly, by coming into a higher temperature and clearer atmosphere. I have known of several European "mirrors" to be damaged from like causes. Mr. Macready often brought to my mind what Quintillian says in one of his discourses on Rhetoric, which, with a slight alteration, and putting the actor in place of the orator, would apply very truly to the tragedian named. That distinguished writer says: "When a subject becomes deeply serious, and strong passions are to be moved, who can bear the orator who, in affected language and balanced phrases, endeavors to express wrath, commiseration, or earnest entreaty? On all such occasions, a solicitous attention to words weakens passion, and when so much art is shown, there is suspected to be little sincerity." I would say of Mr. Macready's acting, that where so much art was apparent, and clearly to be seen in his measured declamation and oft-repeated attitudes, although one might admire the skill with which he rounded off his periods in speaking, and the precision of his "stage business" in acting, yet there was very

little, if any, of the fervor of passion in the one, or of nature or the appearance of reality in the other. It was holding the mirror up to art, but not to nature. A practical and experienced sculptor might use his tools with skill and judgment, but it is only the one of genius who can arouse and delight you with brilliant and beautiful manifestations of thought. One might appreciate the great labor Mr. Macready had gone through in acquiring the skill he showed in his profession, although at the same time one must regret his inability in portraying the strong passions of our natures, or in giving vitality, or even warmth, to them. With all his art, he had not that important faculty of concealing his art.

I think Mr. Macready made a great mistake when he abandoned the idea of devoting himself to the service of the church. In that position I believe he would have gone down to posterity as an eminent divine and an exemplary Christian, both of which distinctions I candidly believe he would have deserved more than that of an eminent tragedian. Had not Edmund Kean given himself up to dissipation, and died as early in life as he did, William Charles Macready would have sunk into the obscurity of the Drama, as many men have done before and since his time, and who had far more requisites for the stage than he ever possessed. Or, had he given himself to literary pursuits, as a writer I think he would have been highly successful. In reading his *Reminiscences*, I find much to admire. His style is very lucid, and his language well selected; except here and there, where he introduces sentences of French and Latin, as he does frequently; this smacks of pedantry, and to my notion appears quite out of place. That Mr. Macready was a well-educated man, appears sufficiently in his selection of pure Anglo-Saxon words, and the construction of sentences as we find them in his book. There was no need of any further *notes of admiration* to be introduced from foreign languages. I could, I am sure, have admired Mr. Macready as a clergyman or an author much more than I ever did as an actor.

CHAPTER LVI.

Mr. Forrest in Mobile — Author goes to New Orleans to arrange for Cincinnati Theatre — St. Charles Company leave for St. Louis to Play with Macready — Biography of Mr. Macready — Astor Opera-house Riot — The St. Louis *Revue* started — Great Flood of 1844 — Mr. Forrest plays in Cincinnati — Mr. Hackett — Mr. Alexander — Mr. H. Placide — His Biography — First Matinée in St. Louis Theatre — Disturbance at Nauvoo — Death of Joe Smith — Biography of Mr. Neafie — Mr. Placide and Ludlow Play in Cincinnati — “Mary Tudor” brought out in St. Louis — Close of Season — Gen. Gaines and Wife.

MONDAY, March 18th, Mr. Edwin Forrest commenced an engagement in Mobile, having just concluded a very successful one in the St. Charles Theatre, New Orleans. Mr. Forrest commenced with *Othello*; receipts \$528.50. March 19th, Mr. Forrest in *Macbeth*; receipts \$330.50. March 20th, he played *King Lear*; receipts \$324.50. March 21st, first night of *Metamora*; receipts \$656. On this day I started for New Orleans, to arrange some business with my partner relative to closing the season in that city, and to adjust the manner in which we should play Mr. Macready in St. Louis and Cincinnati. March 22d, Mr. Forrest enacted *Damon*, in “Damon and Pythias;” receipts \$319.75. March 23d, Mr. Forrest as *Richard III.*; receipts \$448. Being in New Orleans at this time, I closed a contract which my partner had previously arranged with Mr. John Bates, of Cincinnati, for the occupancy of the National Theatre of that city, for six months from the 22d of April ensuing, at sixty dollars per week. The St. Charles closed this night (23d March) for the season, with the benefit of Mrs. Farren. The season being over, the company of the St. Charles Theatre proceeded to St. Louis, Mr. Macready going with them. He acted nine nights, to good houses; and then went to Cincinnati, the company going with him, where he opened on the 24th, and played six nights, the engagement not being profitable to the management. This, perhaps, would be a time as appropriate as any other for me to introduce a short sketch of the life of William Charles Macready.

I here insert some extracts taken from Joseph N. Ireland’s “Records of the New York Stage.” He says: “Mr. Macready was born in London, March 3, 1793; son of a respectable Co-

vent Garden actor, who was afterwards a well-known and successful manager at Manchester, Bristol, and other towns in England. Macready made his *début* at Birmingham, as *Romeo*, in 1810. He made his first appearance in London at Covent Garden, September 16th, as *Orestes*, in the 'Distressed Mother;' but his merit as a tragedian was not fully established until his appearance as *Virginius*, in 1820, and in *Damon*, both original characters with him. Mr. Macready's first appearance in America was at the Park Theatre, October 2, 1826, as *Virginius*, and the criticisms of the next day pronounced him second only to Cooper. He returned to Europe at the end of the season, and did not visit America again until the fall of 1843, when he passed in triumph through the country, making his last appearance on the Park stage, September 27, 1844. In October, 1848, he again presented himself at the Astor Place Opera-house, announcing a farewell tour in the United States. After performing at Baltimore, Philadelphia, and other cities, and receiving a public dinner at New Orleans, Mr. Macready returned to this city (New York), and was advertised to appear as *Macbeth* at the Astor Opera-house, then directed by Messrs. Niblo and Hackett, May 8, 1849, when the Forrest riot commenced." On this night, Mr. Macready, considering his life in danger from the missiles thrown upon the stage, had the curtain rung down when the play was only half through. He was induced by friends to try the same character again on the 10th, and went through the entire play, the doors closed part of the time to keep out the rioters, who were thundering at them for entrance. Mr. Macready succeeded in getting away privately, but the storm proceeded until the soldiers, having been called in, fired upon the mob, killing about twenty-two men and wounding thirty-six. He was so frightened that he bade adieu to New York forever. Mr. Macready made his final appearance on the stage at the Haymarket Theatre, London, as *Macbeth*, February 26, 1851. He died at Cheltenham, near London, England, April 28, 1873, aged eighty years.

March 25th, I returned from New Orleans, having made arrangements for the departure of my New Orleans company for St. Louis. On this night Mr. Forrest performed *Jack Cade* in the Mobile Theatre; receipts \$413.50. March 26th, Mr. Forrest performed *Metamora*; receipts \$265.50. Engaged this day Mr. Edwin Dean and family (including the afterwards celebrated Julia Dean) for the remainder of our winter season here and the ensuing St. Louis season. March 27th, Mr. Forrest performed *Spartacus*, in Dr. Bird's tragedy of the

"Gladiator;" receipts \$327. March 28th, Mr. Forrest played *Jack Cade*; receipts \$185.50. Rained hard all day. March 29th, Mr. Forrest's benefit, he played *Richelieu* and two acts of the "Gladiator;" receipts \$573. March 30th, we played "La Tour De Nesle" and the farce of "Turn Out," to \$54.50,—a beautiful specimen of the effects of the "starring" system. The excitement of the Macready and the Forrest being over, they march off with the money and leave the managers the bag to hold, until they find it convenient to come back. Mr. Macready played ten nights, averaging \$445.80 per night, Mr. Forrest's eleven nights averaging \$397.50. Mr. Forrest started this day for Cincinnati. I could not get him to say that he would play with us at St. Louis the ensuing season. He said he did not like to follow so close on the heels of Mr. Macready, when that gentleman had just drained the public purse; he would play alternate nights with him, if such an arrangement could be made, or he would play in the same pieces with him, if they could mutually agree upon the plays to be performed.

April 1st, the performance was for the benefit of Mrs. Mary Stuart, a favorite actress with the Mobileans; the receipts were \$603.25. April 2d was for the benefit of Mr. Samuel B. Stockwell, scenic artist of the theatre, on which occasion was performed the romantic drama of "Æthiop, or the Child of the Desert;" after which a spectacular piece entitled "Life in China," written by Mr. J. M. Field, and intended, principally, as a vehicle for a display of fine scenery.

April 5th was the benefit night of Mrs. W. H. Smith, when was performed "Æthiop" and the farce of "The New Footman." This was the last night of the season.

This season, as the reader no doubt has reasonably concluded it would be, proved a losing one to the managers. I was forced to borrow money to pay off my people. They were in the same situation as the managers,—in want of money to pay what they owed,—and could not, with a few exceptions, wait for their money until we reached St. Louis.

April 7, 1845, my company and myself left Mobile for St. Louis, and arrived at New Orleans the next morning early. I engaged a passage for myself on the steamer "Harry of the West," for St. Louis, and left on Wednesday, April 10th. Master Joseph Burke, the young and highly gifted comedian and musician, was a fellow-passenger. Mrs. W. H. Smith, T. Placide, Mrs. Stuart and her children, and our scenic artist, Mr. Samuel B. Stockwell, were also on the boat. Before leaving New Orleans, I arranged with Mr. J. H. Cald-

well for another season in Mobile. On April 16th we arrived at St. Louis, about midnight. I found Mr. Macready had been playing to a very indifferent business for a man of his great reputation. Mr. Macready opened in St. Louis, April 9, 1844, in *Hamlet*; April 10th, in *Richelieu*; 11th, *Virginus*; 13th, *Werner*; 15th, *Othello*; 16th, *Shylock*; 17th, Mr. Macready's benefit, and last night of his engagement, receipts \$587.50. As far as the management was concerned, Mr. Macready's engagement was a failure. On the 18th, the "Heir at Law" was performed by the stock company, I enacting the part of *Doctor Pangloss*. On the 19th, a part of our company, who had been playing with Mr. Macready, started for Cincinnati to perform there with him, under the direction of my partner, I remaining in St. Louis to conduct the season there. About this time my son-in-law, M. C. Field, formed a partnership with his brother, J. M. Field, and Mr. Charles Keemle, for the purpose of publishing and editing a daily paper called the St. Louis *Reveille*, which was very popular for several years. The first number was issued on the 14th of May, 1844. April 23d, the Cincinnati Theatre (late National) was opened by Mr. Smith, with Mr. Macready in *Hamlet*. Mr. Macready's engagement in Cincinnati was a little better than that in St. Louis, but not profitable to the management. On the 17th of May was the benefit of Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Field in St. Louis, and their last appearance on the stage for several years, Mr. Field leaving the stage to devote himself to the co-editing of the St. Louis *Reveille* with his brother and Mr. Keemle. During the month of May, 1844, the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers rose to a height unequalled before or since, the sidewalks and lower stories of the buildings on Front Street being flooded, the boats lying close to the warehouses and receiving freight from the second stories.

Mr. Forrest began an engagement in Cincinnati on the 4th of May, under the management of Mr. Smith, my partner. He played about a week, the receipts averaging more than those of Mr. Macready's last engagement. May 20th, Mr. Hackett made his first appearance this season in the character of *Falstaff*, in the first part of "Henry IV." He played seven nights. Mr. Hackett left on the 1st of June, to perform at our theatre in Cincinnati. Mr. Alexander, a German magician, was engaged for four nights. June 10th, Mr. Forrest began an engagement of ten nights, when he performed *Richelieu*. His engagement was not a success. June 21st, a benefit was given to the sufferers by a great fire in

New Orleans, the entire receipts being \$63.50, which were sent to them; the smallness of this amount being owing, probably, to the fact of the great interest taken by the people in the coming fall election. June 24th, Mr. Henry Placide made his first appearance in St. Louis, and was well received; but his engagement was not profitable. Henry Placide was born in Charleston, South Carolina, September 8, 1799, his father being at the time manager of the theatre in that city. The first knowledge I had of Henry Placide was at Albany, New York, in 1814-15, where his mother, then a widow, was performing under the management of the venerable John Bernard, one of the finest actors, in his day, that ever appeared upon the boards of an American stage. Henry was then about fifteen years of age, but exceedingly clever in many small characters which at times he was permitted to assume. In the production of the pantomime of "*La Peyrouse*," brought out at the Albany Theatre in 1814, the *Chimpanzee* in it was intrusted to Henry Placide, who made the creature a prominent part of the pantomime, and for which he received great praise. His mother not long after married a musician, a Frenchman named J. C. Lafolle. This gentleman was many years after (in 1828) leader of my orchestra in Mobile. Mr. Ireland says that "Henry Placide made his first appearance at the Park Theatre, September 2, 1823, in the character of *Zekiel Homespun* (Heir at Law), when he at once gained a prominent position in the favor of the audience, that his twenty years' service there never impaired. From clowns of the broadest Yorkshire dialect to the most mincing Cockney cit, in the garrulous Frenchman and the high-born English gentleman, the simple rustic or the keenest London footman, the hobbledoy or the pathetic childishness of extreme old age, he was equally at home and equally superior. Who like him, as *Fathom*, ever divided the applauses of an audience with Fanny Kemble? or drew away attention from Power's *Pat Rooney*, through the simplicity of little *Tom Dobbs*? or excelled the Irish gentlemen *McShane* and *O'Doherty*, by the perfection of his *Aspen* and *Frederick II.*? Or whose *Doctor Caius* but his ever interfered with the impressions of a *Falstaff*? Who has ever approached him as *Lord Ogleby*, or *Grandfather Whitehead*, or *Charles XII.*, or *Jean Jacques Frisacque*, or *Frank Oatland*, or *Farmer Ashfield*, or a hundred other parts?" So much for the opinion of Mr. Ireland, one of the best critics of this century, as evidenced in his "*Records of the New York Stage*," the most correct and reliable work of the kind yet issued in reference to the American stage.

As far as my observation has extended, and I have seen the larger proportion of what may be termed the prominent actors of America, I have never beheld one who could approach to the excellence of Henry Placide as a genuine comedy actor; and that, too, of unlimited range. Henry Placide's first appearance on any stage was in the Charleston Theatre, October 14, 1808, in *David*, in the play of the "Blind Bargain," and *Florio di Rosalvi*, in "Hunter of the Alps," he being then nine years of age. In 1840, Mr. Placide made a visit to England on business for Mr. Edmund Simpson, then sole manager of the Park Theatre. He did not perform there, but returned in August of that year. During the following year, 1841, he did propose to have sailed on the 10th of March with Tyrone Power, on the ill-fated steamship *President*, that was lost at sea, when every soul on board perished, and Henry Placide would have been one of them but for the almost miraculous intervention and urgent persuasion of Edwin Forrest. This gentleman was so earnest in his wishes to prevent his friend Placide from going, that he put himself to considerable pains to procure him a "star" engagement upon very lucrative terms in order to detain him. He was thus induced to let the vessel start without him. This was the commencement of a series of "star" engagements in following years, by which Mr. Placide made a large amount of money. About the beginning of the May following the departure of Mr. Power, Placide started for England on the steamer *Great Western*, expecting to join Mr. Power in London, but learned on his arrival at Liverpool that the steamer *President*, nor its passengers, had ever been heard of since their departure from New York in March. Mr. Placide played a "star" engagement in London, and although received with some degree of courtesy, yet invidious comparisons appeared in the public prints when he performed characters that had been long in possession of Messrs. Farren and Fawcett. Mr. Placide returned to New York in September of 1841, and on the 29th of that month made his first appearance as *Sir Peter Teazle*. Shortly after, "London Assurance" was produced at the Park Theatre, when Mr. Placide appeared for the first time as *Sir Harcourt Courtly*, making an impression that has never been effaced by any person yet appearing in that character. The latter part of November, 1843, Mr. Placide made his first appearance at the St. Charles Theatre, New Orleans, under the management of Ludlow & Smith; but he came at an unfortunate time, during a great financial depression in that city, and his success was not equal to his merits. He played an engagement of two

weeks, and then went to Mobile and played there in the theatre of Ludlow & Smith, his houses averaging better than at New Orleans, in proportion to the population. Mr. Placide died January 20, 1870, aged seventy years, four months, and twelve days, at his residence at Babylon, Long Island, New York, where he had resided for many years, leading quite a retired life. He left no family, having never been married. For many years prior to his death he had been totally blind, an affliction apparently hereditary. His sister, Mrs. Eliza Mann, was blind five years prior to her death.

July 2d, the receipts were \$26.75! to a good play and farce, by a good stock company. The worst house of the season. July 3d, Mrs. Farren's benefit. On the morning of July 4th was our first day-performance,—“Children in the Wood,” and “Forest of Rosenwald;” receipts, \$66.40. Matinéés being a new thing then in the West, some of the company refused to play on this occasion. The performance at night was the “Declaration of Independence,” “Rendez-vous,” two dances, and “Life in China.” This night concluded our spring season in St. Louis. July 6th, there was a performance for the benefit of the sufferers by the recent flood, for which most of the company volunteered, — all free, except bills and two attendants; receipts, \$67.50. Performance, “Lady of Lyons,” and “Of Age To-morrow.” In this latter piece I played *Frederick, Baron Willinghurst*,—a very laborious part. Mr. W. G. Wells volunteered a dance.

About this time, news was received in St. Louis of a disturbance that had just occurred at Nauvoo, among the Mormons, on the 29th of the previous month, in which their leader, Joe Smith, and his brother Hiram, were shot by a party of raiders, who broke into the jail and dragged them forth. The cause alleged for this outrage on the Mormons was that they had destroyed a printing establishment which had published articles against them.

On the 13th of August, in consequence of articles which had appeared in the *People's Organ*, a small paper then published in St. Louis, stating that the rear wall of the theatre was in danger of falling, I called in a committee of builders to make an examination. The committee consisted of Oliver Hart, Mr. Brewster (his partner), John B. Gibson, and Mr. Meredith. They pronounced the building perfectly safe.

On the 26th of August the fall season commenced. Performance, “She Stoops to Conquer,” and “Green-eyed Monster.” September 3d, M. C. Field started for Boston, from thence to embark on a long sea-voyage for the benefit of

his health. It proved a long voyage indeed, as he died on the vessel between Boston and Mobile, in the following November. September 15th, I started in the steamer *Virginian* for Cincinnati, to take the place of my partner, who was ill and wished to return to his home in St. Louis, leaving the business of the St. Louis Theatre in charge of Mr. J. M. Weston, stage-manager; Mr. George Stanley, prompter; and Mr. A. B. Cook, treasurer. On the 20th we arrived at the entrance of the canal at Louisville, where we were detained several hours waiting for other boats to pass through the canal. During this detention I went up to Louisville, and visited the theatre then in process of erection, for which we had been trying to negotiate a lease. This building was finished some time afterwards; but the terms not suiting us, we did not lease it. About ten o'clock the next morning we started for Cincinnati, where we arrived at midnight of the 22d. September 23d, Mr. Neafie took his benefit; it was his last appearance previous to his return to St. Louis. On this occasion he performed *Macbeth*. I shall here give a short biography of Mr. Neafie, who was for several years a popular actor in the West:—

J. A. Neafie was, I believe, born in Philadelphia, about 1809, and, as I was told, in early life put to learn the trade of a cabinet-maker; but the boards of a cabinet-shop did not appear to him as interesting as the "boards" of a theatre, so he left the former to try the latter. After trying these boards as an amateur a few times, he came to the conclusion he could make a better "job" by working that way than he could by pursuing his old trade. Where he made his first professional appearance I am unable to say, or where he pushed his fortunes as an actor for the first few years of his career; but in 1838 I find he appeared at the Park Theatre, New York, on the 20th of February, in the character of *Othello*, and, it has been said, with decided success. His second appearance there was on the 2d of March succeeding, in *Shylock*, and on the 8th of the same month, for his benefit, played *Richard III*. Shortly after this he came to the West and joined the company of Ludlow & Smith, where he remained about two years, and became a favorite, when he started out as a "star," and was successful and made money. He was the most successful actor in the way of making a benefit for himself; it was a peculiar gift with him. Some years after, I understood he abandoned the stage, having acquired considerable wealth by speculating in city lots.

I did not like the Cincinnati Theatre as well as that in St.

Louis. I was disappointed in this theatre, not finding it as beautiful as I had supposed from the description I had heard of it, and thought the St. Louis Theatre larger and more commodious. September 24th, Mr. T. Placide and I opened in Cincinnati, both of us having been great favorites there in previous seasons. But at this time the public mind was too much occupied with politics and mesmerism to attend to any thing else. The people at this time were deeply absorbed by the lectures of Prof. De Bonneville on Animal Magnetism.

My partner left for St. Louis on the morning of the 22d, leaving Mr. C. A. Logan to act as manager, he having performed the duties of that office during Mr. Smith's illness.

On the 7th of October this company commenced playing as a commonwealth, on a plan which I had proposed and they had accepted, for an after-season, the regular season having been closed on the 5th of October.

This arrangement was made for the benefit of some of the actors whose engagements with us had expired, and for others who, being engaged for our winter season, we did not wish to employ during the interim.

Mr. Dean and his daughter left us here, as the family had concluded to make a permanent residence in Cincinnati. On winding up our season here, I found that we had lost about \$1,100.

On the 9th of October I left Cincinnati on the Little Pike, for Louisville, where I took another boat, the Plymouth, for St. Louis, and arrived on the 15th; being six days making the trip, which is now done in thirteen hours by rail. When I arrived in St. Louis, I found the business of the theatre much better than when I left. A new piece had been brought out, entitled "Mary Tudor." This was a play which had been translated from the French and adapted to the English stage by Mr. Edmund Flagg, a gentleman of St. Louis, who possessed considerable literary acquirements. The piece proved a success, as far as success could be secured with Henry Clay, James K. Polk, and their partisans against it.

October 19th was produced the "Bride of Abydos," got up in very handsome style, with new scenery, painted by Mr. Stockwell. It was played four nights in succession, averaging \$164 per night.

On the 26th of October, Mr. Weston took a benefit, on which occasion "Lucretia Borgia" was produced, as altered and adapted by him; Mrs. Farren playing the title rôle. On the 28th, Mrs. Farren took a benefit.

November 1st, we played "Guy Mannering" and "Loan

of a Lover ; ” the part of *Ernestine* by Miss Sylvia, — her first appearance in our theatre. This young lady’s engagement with us was made under peculiar circumstances. She presented herself one morning at the box-office, and requested to see the manager. I was sent for, and on entering the office I inquired her business. She said she wanted to act. I asked what she wanted to act? She replied that she would act any thing. I then asked her what she *had* acted. She replied that she had never acted any thing in a regular theatre, but was willing to undertake whatever I would assign to her. We never had engaged novices without knowing something of their antecedents. I therefore questioned her with regard to her parents, and where she had been living. She told me that she had just come from Cincinnati, and that her parents were dead ; that she had a little sister and two young brothers dependent on her exertions. Her manner was so earnest, and apparently so honest, that I was induced to give her a trial. She opened in the part of *Ernestine*, in which her appearance was so favorable that we engaged her for that line of characters called in theatrical parlance “ walking ladies.” She was with us four or five years, and finally became a “ leading lady ” in our theatre.

On the 31st of October we made a new arrangement with Mr. George Collier, then proprietor of the St. Louis Theatre, for a lease of three years, at \$2,000 per year.

November 2d, benefit of N. M. Ludlow ; the performance being “ Ladies’ Man,” “ Paul Jones,” and “ New Footman ; ” receipts, \$300. This night closed the fall season of 1844 at the St. Louis Theatre.

After paying the company all that was due them, and settling all debts owing to citizens, I engaged passage for myself and family on the steamer Champlain, Capt. Freligh, and left St. Louis for New Orleans on the 8th of November. Amongst our fellow-passengers were Gen. Gaines, lady, and son ; Capt. Reed, aide-de-camp to Gen. Gaines ; Col. Mudge and lady, and my partner, Mr. Smith. This Mrs. Gaines is the celebrated Mrs. Myra Gaines, whose long-continued lawsuits to obtain the lands bequeathed to her by her father, Daniel Clark, have made her so famous. A large portion of this land, lying in the city of New Orleans, and purchased when land was cheap, has now become very valuable, and is worth millions of dollars ; and this accounts for the reluctance of the present possessors to surrender the property, and has caused a succession of lawsuits for thirty years to enable Mrs. Gaines to obtain her rights.

We arrived at New Orleans on the 18th, where I remained until the 21st, waiting the arrival of my partner, who had been accidentally left behind at Vicksburg. Having arranged with him the business of the St. Charles Theatre, I left with my family and part of the company for Mobile, where we arrived the next day.

CHAPTER LVII.

St. Charles Season of 1844-5—Cholera—Mr. H. Placide—J. R. Anderson—Mr. Anderson's Biography—Seguin Troupe at St. Charles—Mrs. Vernon—Her Biography—Biography of Mr. and Mrs. Seguin—Archer's Sable Harmonists—Biography of Charles Webb—Mrs. William Kent, formerly Miss Eberle—N. B. Clarke's Biography—After-Season in New Orleans—Summer Season in St. Louis, 1845—Poor Business.

THE St. Charles season of 1844 opened November 24, to a very poor house. Total receipts for the first week were \$743; loss to the managers, \$1,400. This was a bad beginning, but worse followed; the receipts for the second week being \$660, and for the third week, \$494. This was probably owing to the prevalence of the cholera in the city, and the exaggerated reports which had gone abroad, keeping strangers away, and preventing residents from frequenting places of amusement. The company of the St. Charles for the season of 1844-5 consisted of the following named persons: Messrs. J. M. Weston, Sol. Smith, Charles Webb, J. M. Scott, George P. Farren, Thomas Placide, E. Eddy, Saunders, J. A. J. Neafie, Maynard, Clark, Newton, Hart, Edwards, Stanley, Parr, McMahon, McVicker, Mrs. Farren, Miss E. Randolph, Mrs. Eddy, Mrs. Salzman, Mrs. Hart, Mrs. Warren, Mrs. Newton, Miss Sylvia, Miss Carnahan. The first night's entertainment consisted of "Wives as They Were and Maids as They Are," with the following cast of characters: *Sir William Dorrillon*, Mr. Scott; *Lord Priory*, Mr. Farren; *Bronzly*, Mr. Neafie; *Sir George Evelyn*, Mr. Maynard; *Mr. Norbury*, Mr. Bailey; *Oliver*, Mr. Hart; *Nabson*, Mr. McVicker; *Jailer*, Mr. Edwards; *John*, Mr. Parr; *Miss Dorrillon*, Mrs. Farren; *Lady Marg Raffle*, Mrs. Hart; *Lady Priory*, Miss Randolph; concluding with the farce of "The New Footman:" *Bobby Breakwindow*, Mr. T. Placide; *Mr. Capsicum*, Mr. Newton; *Henry Gordon*, Mr. Bailey; *Mr. Sourcrout*, Mr. McVicker; *Polly Picnic*, Miss Randolph; *Miss Sourcrout*, Mrs. Salzman.

February 1st, Mr. Henry Placide commenced an engagement at the St. Charles, with "Grandfather Whitehead," and "Bombastes Furioso," in which he performed the part of *General Bombastes*. On his second night he performed *Sir*

Abel Handy, in the comedy of "Speed the Plough," when Mrs. Vernon, late of the Park Theatre, New York, played *Lady Handy*. This lady had previously made her first appearance in *Mrs. Malaprop*, in "The Rivals," January 13th. She was engaged for a limited number of nights for the New Orleans and Mobile theatres. Mr. Placide's third performance was *Sir Harcourt Courtly*, in "London Assurance." Fourth night, *Sir William Davenry*, in the comedy of "West End," and *Monsieur le Medicin*, in "The Anatomist." Fifth night, *Michael Perrin*, in "Secret Service." Sixth night, for his benefit, was performed "West End" and "Grandfather Whitehead."

Mr. James R. Anderson commenced an engagement February 10th, opening in *Hamlet*; February 11th, he played *Claude Melnotte*; 12th, *Othello*; 13th, *Mordaunt*, in the "Patrician's Daughter;" 14th, *Macbeth*; 15th, *Richard III.*; 17th, *Claude Melnotte*; 18th, "Stranger" and "Honeymoon," being his first benefit night; 20th, *Claude Melnotte*; 21st, *Coriolanus*; 22d, *Hamlet*; 24th, *Claude Melnotte*; 25th, *Macbeth*; 26th, *Shylock*, in "Merchant of Venice;" 27th, *Claude Melnotte*, and *Petruchio*, in "Katharine and Petruchio," for his benefit. This was his last appearance previous to his departure for Mobile.

The Mobile Theatre having been repainted by Mr. Stockwell, and otherwise renovated, was opened for the season of 1844-5, November 25th, with "Hunchback" and "Ladies' Man;" receipts, \$192. The first eight or ten weeks of the seasons in the Mobile and St. Charles Theatres were occupied with scenic pieces, got up with great care and produced with new scenery and properties; the scenery being painted by Mr. Samuel B. Stockwell, one of the best scenic artists then in the United States. These dramas were from the pens of the best writers, and performed by excellent stock companies to a "beggarly account of empty boxes." This was, no doubt, owing to the scarcity of money, and financial derangements.

The first "star" of our season in Mobile was Mr. Henry Placide, who opened there on the 8th of February in "Grandfather Whitehead," and *Dulcimer Piper*, in the "Double-bedded Room." He played ten nights, to better business than the previous season, and returned to New Orleans, where he performed a few nights. Mr. Anderson was the next star. He opened on the 3d of March, in "Hamlet;" played an engagement of two weeks, when he returned to New Orleans, where he played again. He was very attractive in both cities. He was the first personator of *Claude Melnotte* in the South

and West, and left an impression of that character that has never been effaced by any subsequent representation of it.

As this gentleman was a great favorite in the South and West, I will here give a short sketch of his life, taken from Mr. Ireland's "Records of the New York Stage:"—

Mr. Anderson was the son of an English provincial manager and actor, whose personal character and literary attainments were much above the common order. Young Anderson was born in 1810, and early adopting his hereditary calling, soon established himself in high favor in a wide provincial circuit. He made his first appearance in London at the Covent Garden Theatre, under the auspices of Mr. Macready, in September, 1837, and soon achieved a position on its boards second only to that of Mr. Macready himself. His earlier engagements in New York were brilliantly successful, and he was for a time petted "to the top of his bent;" but nothing being more fickle than popular favor, he was afterwards poorly patronized, and obliged to take to the regions of the South and West, where he found abundant and profitable employment. He last appeared in New York at Wallack's Theatre, November 18, 1856, in "Clouds and Sunshine."

During the time that Mr. Anderson had been performing in Mobile, the Seguin English Opera Troupe had been singing at the St. Charles, New Orleans, commencing on Monday evening, March 3d, with Balfe's opera of the "Bohemian Girl," cast as follows: *Thaddeus*, Mr. Frazer; *Devilshoof*, Mr. Seguin; *Count Arnheim*, Mr. Andrews; *Florestein*, R. Russell; *Captain of the Guard*, Mr. Corri; *Matteo, a Gypsy* Mr. Tut-hill; *Officer*, Mr. Parr; *Peasant*, Mr. McMahon; *Arline*, Mrs. Seguin; *Queen of the Gypsies*, Miss Coad; *Buda*, Mrs. Salz-man. This opera was performed five nights in succession, to large audiences, when "La Sonnambula" was produced, and played two nights during the engagement. On the 11th of March the "Postilion of Lonjumeau" was produced, and played twice during the engagement. On the 12th, "Guy Mannering" was played. On the 13th, "Fra Diavolo" was produced, and repeated on the 15th, the "Postilion" being repeated on the 14th. The Seguin Opera Troupe consisted of only four singers, namely, Mr. and Mrs. Seguin, Mr. Frazer, and Mr. Andrews, the other characters in the operas being filled by the members of our company; and yet this small operatic company drew crowded houses. Their engagement in New Orleans closed on the 15th of March, when they left for Mobile to fulfil an engagement in our theatre there. During the time occupied by the opera troupe in New Orleans, Mrs.

Vernon played an engagement in our Mobile theatre. She opened as *Mrs. Malaprop*, in Sheridan's comedy of the "Rivals;" afterwards playing *Miss Lucretia McTab*, in the "Poor Gentleman," *Lady Duberly*, in the "Heir at Law," and other leading old women.

Mrs. Vernon, although passing but one winter in the South, during which she performed in our theatres, New Orleans and Mobile, where she left behind her an enviable reputation as an actress and a lady, is deserving of a more extended notice here. I therefore add a short sketch of her life:—

Mrs. Jane M. Vernon was born at Brighton, England, about the year 1805. After performing a few years in her own country, she came to America in 1827, and made her first appearance in the United States at the Bowery Theatre, New York, in the character of *Cecily Homespun*, in the comedy of the "Heir at Law." Mr. Ireland, in his "Records of the New York Stage," says Miss Jane Marchant Fisher undoubtedly possessed the greatest amount of talent, although her audience was slow to discover it, and several years elapsed before she was acknowledged as the best comic actress in her line upon the New York stage. In about a month after her appearance at the Bowery Theatre, she married Mr. George Vernon, an actor, who came to America, I believe, in the same vessel with her; and after playing at the Bowery and Chatham Theatres, she was engaged at the Park Theatre to play country girls and chambermaids, making her appearance there the 21st of December, 1830, as *Minette*, in the comedy of "A Bold Stroke for a Husband." In less than three years after her marriage she became a widow. This lady was one of the eminently gifted histrionic family of Fisher. As an actress of versatility and excellence she has never been surpassed, except by her unrivalled sister, Clara Fisher, — Mrs. Maeder. She had a keen perception of the ludicrous, and a most happy talent in the way of burlesque; and her assumption of vulgar importance was immensely comic. In the fall and winter of 1844-5 she was engaged with Ludlow & Smith in their theatres at New Orleans and Mobile; but she remained only for one season, and then returned again to New York, where she once more joined the Park Theatre company, but remained only one season there. She afterwards was a member of Burton's company, and subsequently of Wallack's. Mrs. Vernon was moderately tall, and rather deficient in flesh in her latter days, but still a good figure, and most lady-like in her deportment; and although her face was not handsome, it was animated and

expressive. Her suavity of manner and kindness of heart endeared her to every one who knew her. She died in her own house, University Place, New York, June 2, 1869, and was buried at Greenwood Cemetery.

The Seguin troupe opened in Mobile on the 17th of March, with the "Sonnambula," afterwards playing the operas which they had performed in New Orleans. Their engagement continued eight nights, to good business.

As the names of Edward Seguin and his amiable wife will occupy a prominent position in the musical history of the South and West, I subjoin a brief sketch of their lives :—

Edward Seguin, operatic basso, was born in London, April 7, 1809, and after passing with the highest honors through the British Academy of Music, made his first appearance in London, February 3, 1831. He afterwards appeared with success at the Italian Opera-house and Drury Lane and Covent Garden. He was superior to any English basso singer that preceded him in the United States, and Guiblie was his only successor that could be called his equal. He first appeared in America at the Broadway (Wallack's) Theatre, October 13, 1838, as *Count Vandertiemer*, in the opera of "Amilie," to Miss Shirreff's *Amilie*. His success was unquestionably great. After a most profitable career in New York and other principal theatres, East, West, and South, he took up his residence in New York; and finding his strength failing, he was obliged to desist from singing, and joined the stock company of Wallack's Theatre. Being an excellent actor as well as singer, he appeared September 9, 1852, in the comedy of the "Poor Gentleman," as *Humphrey Dobbins*. His strength failed rapidly, and he died of consumption at his residence, December 13, 1852, deeply regretted.

Mrs. Anne Seguin, whose maiden name was Childe, was born in London, England. She was the wife of Edward Seguin, the basso. At a very early age she appeared as a vocalist at the Philharmonic and Ancient Concerts, and afterwards at the Italian Opera-house and Drury Lane Theatre. She was several years younger than her husband. She made her first appearance in New York at the Park Theatre, in *Camilla*, in the opera of "Zampa," March 29, 1841, and afterwards made a great hit as *Arline*, in "Bohemian Girl." She, with her husband, came South in 1845. With the exception of Mrs. Joseph Wood (formerly Miss Paton), this lady was undoubtedly the most scientific and truly accomplished English operatic vocalist America had seen. She played her last engagement at the Broadway Theatre, June, 1852; and after her husband's

death, the same year, retired from the stage and devoted herself entirely to musical instruction in New York.

A troupe of singers styled "The Sable Harmonists," under the direction of Mr. Thomas Archer, succeeded Mr. Anderson's last engagement in New Orleans, and performed five nights, opening on the 27th of March. This troupe included Cramer, Plumer, Farrell, Tichenor, Wall, Rourk, and Archer. Their performances gave great satisfaction, and were remunerative to themselves and the management. On the 1st of April the benefits of the stock company began, preparatory to the closing of the theatre for the season; Mr. Neafie's being the first, on which occasion he performed *Don Cæsar de Bazan*, preceded by Buckstone's drama of "Agnes de Vere." April 2d, Mr. Farren's benefit, when was performed the "Fair One with the Golden Locks," "The Maniac," and three farces. April 3d, Mr. Charles Webb took his benefit, and enacted the part of *Richard III.* This gentleman was one of the best stock actors ever seen in the Southern and Western theatres in tragedy, and was highly esteemed as a gentleman as well as an actor, but was unfortunately addicted to occasional excesses, which completely transformed him, and finally caused his death. As he was a conspicuous performer in the South and West, I here give a short sketch of his life:—

Charles Webb was born in Pennsylvania, about the year 1800. Mr. Webb commenced his theatrical career in the Southern theatres, — Charleston, South Carolina; Augusta, Georgia; Richmond and Norfolk, Virginia, in which latter city he was at one time a great favorite. He appeared for the first time in the city of New York at the Chatham Theatre, then under the management of Mr. Megary, on the 7th of June, 1827, in *Rolla*, "Pizarro," Mrs. Blake being the *Cora* of the evening. He performed an engagement at the Park Theatre with Miss Vos in 1835. He was a man of fine appearance, with great abilities for the stage, and might have achieved the first position in this country as a tragedian had he not given himself up to intemperance. He was found drowned in a canal or slough, near Washington, District of Columbia, March 6, 1851. It was supposed, from his position when found, that in a state of intoxication he had walked into the water and could not get out; he was frozen stiff when discovered. On April 4th, Mr. T. Placide took his benefit; the pieces performed were "The Two Gregories," "Othello Travestie," "Touch and Take," and "La Femme Soldat." Mr. Placide played *Othello*, Mr. Tuthill *Iago*, Miss Randolph *Desdemona*. On April 5th, for Mrs. Kent's benefit, the per-

formance was "Old Heads and Young Hearts," and the "Critic." In the first piece Mrs. Kent played *Lady Alice Hawthorne*, and Miss Randolph, *Kate Rockett*. This was Mrs. Kent's first and last season in New Orleans, where she had established herself as a great favorite. Her style of acting was piquant and effective, more especially in soubrettes and chambermaids. She was born in the city of New York, of German parents, their name being Eberle. She belonged to a musical family, — her father and brother being musicians, her sisters and herself being all singers. She and her two sisters were brought up on the stage. Elizabeth (Mrs. Kent) was a member of my company in the fall of 1828, when I had the Chatham Theatre, in New York. She was then about seventeen years of age. A few years afterwards she married Mr. William Kent, an actor, and came to the West, where she played in the Ohio and Kentucky theatres, and became a great favorite. She has been dead many years, but I don't know the precise date of her decease.

On Monday, the 7th of April, Mrs. Farren took her benefit, the performance being "Mary Tudor" and "Agnes de Vere," Mrs. Farren playing the title *rôle* in each piece. This lady's benefits were always good in New Orleans, for she was considered by the play-going community there as their own, having been reared among them. April 8th, benefit of Mr. N. B. Clarke, when was performed the "Lear of Private Life" and "Ambrose Gwinette." Mr. Clarke's benefit was not very well attended. He was a very useful actor, but not a very brilliant one. As he performed for several years in the West and South, I will here give a brief sketch of his life: —

Mr. N. B. Clarke was born in Connecticut, in 1810. His real name was Belden. His father was a clergyman, and designed him for the pulpit, but he preferred the stage. He made his first appearance in 1830, in New York, at the Chatham Theatre, as *Lord Rivers*, in the "Day After the Wedding." He played in the West and South in the company of Ludlow & Smith from 1837 to 1840, then returned to the East. He appeared at the old Bowery Theatre, New York, September 3, 1848, as *Quasimodo*, in the melodrama of "Esmeralda." His last appearance was at the Bowery, New York, as *Jack Rivers*, in "Bertha, the Sewing-Machine Girl." He died in New York, April 13, 1872, at the age of sixty-two, universally esteemed for his honor and integrity. Mr. James H. Caldwell died at Mr. Clarke's residence in the city of New York.

The 9th of April was, by request, set apart for the benefit of the Firemen's Charitable Association, when the entertain-

ment was composed of "Old Heads and Young Hearts," followed by a "Fireman's Address," spoken by Mrs. Farren; after which the "Two Gregories" was performed. The house was well filled.

April 10th, benefit of Mr. Maynard, when were represented two new pieces, — "The Bride of Death," written by a member of the company, and a farce written by a gentleman of New Orleans, entitled "The Kingdom of Woman." April 10th, the last night of the season, was a great combination of attractions, including the "Kentucky giantess." The first piece was "Ellen Wareham," the farce "Touch and Take." Mr. Sol. Smith sung a comic song, called "Love and Sausages," between the play and the farce.

The winter season of 1844-5, both in New Orleans and Mobile, was very disastrous to the management. At the close of the winter season in Mobile, I started with the Mobile company and some of those of New Orleans for St. Louis, to commence our spring season there. My partner remained in New Orleans with a portion of the company, and commenced an after-season, at reduced prices, on the 12th of April. The rates of admission were as follows: Dress-circle, parquet, and second tier, fifty cents; gallery, twenty cents. This was merely an experiment to try the effect of low prices. This rate was a reduction of one-half on the dress-circle and parquet, and one-third on the second and third tiers. But the experiment was unsuccessful, as it only increased the number of the audience without increasing the receipts. The season was a short one, consisting of five nights, and closing on the 16th of April, when the company took their departure for St. Louis.

The St. Louis season of 1845 commenced on the 26th of April, the performance being a good comedy and farce, to a moderately filled house. I shall pass over this season briefly, as it was not particularly interesting to the public or profitable to the management. This was owing, no doubt, to the financial condition of the country, and the agitation of the public mind in anticipation of the war with Mexico, which commenced early the following year. The only "stars" which proved attractive this season were Mr. J. R. Anderson and the Seguin Opera Troupe.

Mr. James R. Anderson was the most attractive "star" of this season, owing in a great degree to the excellent manner in which he enacted the character of *Claude Melnotte*, in Bulwer's play of the "Lady of Lyons." Mr. Anderson was, in my mind, unquestionably the truest representative of that character that I have ever seen, even up to the present time.

His tall and manly figure and animated looks and actions were *my beau ideal* of the ardent lover and determined, heroic youth so splendidly drawn by the pen of Bulwer. His stage business, his dress, — in short, his *tout-ensemble*, — was entire and perfect. Next to *Claude Melnotte*, I think Mr. Anderson's *Charles de Moor*, in the translation from the German of Schiller, and entitled "The Robbers," was among his best representations.

During this summer our theatre was closed from the 4th of July until the 1st of September. Several members of the company, banding together, formed a little troupe and visited the neighboring towns of Illinois, thus passing their vacation pleasantly and profitably to themselves.

Our fall season in St. Louis closed on the last of October, when the late company, with additional new members, started on their voyage South to commence the seasons of New Orleans and Mobile.

CHAPTER LVIII.

Mobile Season, 1845-6 — Mr. and Mrs. Skerrett — J. B. Booth — Mobile and New Orleans — Dan Marble — E. S. Conner — Miss Clara Ellis — W. H. Chippendale — Henry Placide and Tom Placide — Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Field — Mr. Hackett — Sol. Smith — Niblo's Acrobats — Mrs. Mowatt — W. H. Crisp — Mr. and Mrs. C. Kean — Miss Petrie — Close of Season — Anecdote of W. H. C. King — Sketch of Mr. and Mrs. Skerrett — Biography of W. H. Crisp.

THE Mobile season of 1845-6 opened on the 24th of November, the St. Charles Theatre having opened a few nights previous. The following ladies and gentlemen were members of the Mobile stock company this season: Mrs. J. M. Field, Mrs. Mary Stuart, Mrs. G. Skerrett, Miss C. McBride, and others; Mr. J. M. Field, Mr. Charles Webb, Mr. W. H. Chippendale, Mr. G. Skerrett, Mr. G. Roberts, N. M. Ludlow, Mr. R. Russell, Jr., Mr. A. J. Marks, Mr. Tuthill, and others.

The performance on the opening night consisted of the "Hunchback," and the comic opera of "Sprigs of Laurel." The leading characters of the play were cast as follows: *Master Walter*, C. Webb; *Sir Thomas Clifford*, G. Roberts; *Master Modus*, N. M. Ludlow; *Fathom*, Marks; *Julia*, Mrs. J. M. Field; *Helen*, Mrs. Stuart.

December 22d, Mr. and Mrs. G. Skerrett made their first appearance in Mobile in Goldsmith's comedy, "She Stoops to Conquer:" *Tony Lumpkin*, Mr. Skerrett; *Miss Hardcastle*, Mrs. Skerrett. The performance concluded with the farce of "The Loan of a Lover:" *Peter Spyke*, Mr. Skerrett; *Gertrude*, Mrs. Skerrett. Mr. and Mrs. Skerrett were announced as "stars" for six nights, during which they performed the following pieces: "The Wandering Boys," "Swiss Cottage," "Turn Out," "The Four Sisters," "Kill or Cure," "Windmill."

December 4th, Mr. J. B. Booth commenced an engagement in the Mobile Theatre. He opened in the "Iron Chest," in which he performed *Sir Edward Mortimer*. December 5th, he performed *Othello*, Mr. Webb playing *Iago*, Mrs. J. W. Field *Desdemona*, Mrs. Stuart *Emilia*. December 6th, Mr. Booth performed *Sir Giles Overreach*, in "New Way to Pay Old Debts;" Mr. Webb played *Wellborn*, Mr. Skerrett *Mar-*
all, Mr. Marks *Justice Greedy*, Mrs. Stuart *Margaret Over-*

reach, Mrs. Russell *Lady Allworth*. December 8th, "Richard III." was performed, Mr. Booth enacting *Richard*; *Duke of Richmond*, Mr. Roberts; *Buckingham*, Mr. Webb; *Queen*, Mrs. Stuart; *Lady Ann*, Miss McBride; *Duchess of York*, Mrs. Russell. December 9th, Maturin's tragedy of "Bertram" was performed: *Bertram*, Mr. Booth; *Imogene*, Mrs. Stuart. December 10th, "King Lear" was played: *King Lear*, Mr. Booth; *Cordelia*, Mrs. J. M. Field. December 11th, the tragedy of the "Apostate" was produced: *Pescara*, Mr. Booth; *Malec*, Mr. Webb; *Hemeya*, Mr. Roberts; *Florinda*, Mrs. Stuart. December 12th, Mr. Booth's benefit, when he performed *Hamlet*; Mr. Webb as the *Ghost*; Mr. Roberts, *Laertes*; Mr. Skerrett, *Polonius*; Mr. Marks, *1st Grave-digger*; Mrs. Stuart, *Queen*; Mrs. Skerrett, *Ophelia*. December 13th, Mr. Booth played one night more, as a compliment to the management, being his last appearance in Mobile this season, on which occasion was performed Coleman's play of "The Mountaineers:" *Octavian*, Mr. Booth; *Killmallock*, Mr. Tuthill; *Bulcazen Muley*, Mr. Webb; *Lope Tocho*, Mr. Marks; *Floranthe*, Mrs. J. M. Field; after which was played "Sam Patch in France," in which Mr. Marble made his first appearance this season, in the character of *Sam Patch*; concluding with the nautical drama of "Black-eyed Susan," in which Mr. Marble played *William*; Mrs. Stuart, *Susan*. After finishing his engagement in Mobile, Mr. Booth went to New Orleans, and played a short engagement at the St. Charles Theatre. On the 15th of December, Mr. Marble appeared in "Jonathan in England" and the "Backwoodsman." On the 16th he performed *Lot*, in "Hue and Cry," and *Philip*, in "Luke, the Laborer." On his fourth night he played in the "Wool-dealer" and "Backwoodsman." The fifth night, he performed *Israel Putnam* in "Times that Tried Us," and *William*, in "Black-eyed Susan." The seventh night, he appeared in *Deuteronomy Dutiful*, in the "Wool-dealer," and *Tom Cringle* and *Diggory* in the "Stage-struck Yankee." December 23d, benefit of Mr. Marble, when he appeared in five characters: *Bob Stay*, in the nautical drama of "Larboard Fin," after which the rural drama of the "Forest Rose," in which he played *Jonathan Ploughboy*; followed by "Jonathan in England," in which he acted *Solomon Swap*; subsequent to that, the "Backwoodsman;" the whole concluding with the "Stage-struck Yankee." At the close of his Mobile engagement, Mr. Marble went to New Orleans, and played an engagement at the St. Charles Theatre.

December 24th, Miss Clara Ellis and Mr. E. S. Conner

commenced an engagement of a few nights, opening with the "Lady of Lyons:" *Pauline*, Miss Ellis; *Claude Melnotte*, Mr. Conner. December 25th, Mr. Conner played *Buridan*, in "La Tour de Nesle;" Miss Ellis did not appear; Mrs. Stuart played *Margarette of Burgundy*. December 26th, the tragedy of "Evadne." December 27th, "The Merchant of Venice:" *Shylock*, Mr. Conner; *Bassanio*, Mr. Webb; *Gratiano*, Mr. Ludlow; *Portia*, Miss Ellis. December 29th, Boucicault's comedy of "Old Heads and Young Hearts" was produced, in which Mr. W. H. Chippendale, of the London and New York theatres, made his first appearance in Mobile, in the character of *Jesse Rural*; Mr. Conner, *Tom Coke*; Mr. Webb, *Colonel Rockett*; Miss Ellis, *Lady Alice Hawthorne*. December 30th, the same piece was repeated. December 31st, benefit of Mrs. J. M. Field, "Tortosa" was performed, and "The Soldier's Daughter." In "Tortosa" Mr. Conner played *Angelo*; Mr. Webb, *Tortosa*; Mrs. Field, *Isabella*; Mrs. Stuart, *Zippa*. In the "Soldier's Daughter" Mr. Chippendale played *Governor Heartall*; Mr. Ludlow, *Frank Heartall*; Mr. Marks, *Timothy Quaint*; Miss Ellis, *Widow Cheerly*. January 1, 1846, Milman's tragedy of "Fazio" was performed: *Fazio*, Mr. Conner; *Bianca*, Miss Ellis. In the farce of "The Thumping Legacy," Mr. Chippendale performed *Jerry Ominous*. January 2d, *Grandfather Whitehead* was performed by Mr. Chippendale, and *Pythagoras Spoon* in the farce of "Wilful Murder." January 3d, benefit of Mr. Chippendale, when was performed "Old Heads and Young Hearts" and the "Thumping Legacy." January 5th, benefit and last appearance of the Sable Harmonists, on which occasion was performed the play of "The Stranger" and the farce of the "Dead Shot;" *Stranger*, Mr. Conner; *Mrs. Haller*, Miss Ellis. After the play there was a grand concert of the Sable Harmonists. In the "Dead Shot" Mr. Thomas Placide performed *Mr. Timid*, being his first appearance in Mobile this season. January 6th, benefit of Mr. E. S. Conner, when was performed Bulwer's play of "Richelieu:" *Cardinal Richelieu*, Mr. Conner; after which the "Lady of Lyons" was performed. January 7th, benefit of Miss Clara Ellis, when was performed the tragedy of "Evadne," and the "Belle's Stratagem:" *Doricourt*, Mr. Ludlow; *Flutter*, Mr. Conner; *Letitia Hardy*, Miss Ellis; *Widow Rackett*, Mrs. Stuart; *Lady Frances*, Miss Sylvia.

January 8th, first night of Mr. Henry Placide this season, and second night of Mr. Thomas Placide, his brother, who was engaged to play with him. Mr. H. Placide began his en-

gagement by enacting *Grandfather Whitehead*; Mr. Tom Placide appearing in the farce as *Mr. Peter White*. After the farce there was a grand display of fire-works in honor of the day; the performance concluding with the farce of "Nature and Philosophy." January 9th, the comedy of the "School for Scandal:" *Sir Peter Teazle*, Mr. H. Placide; *Sir Oliver Surface*, Mr. Prior; *Joseph Surface*, Mr. Webb; *Charles Surface*, Mr. Ludlow; *Crabtree*, Mr. T. Placide; *Lady Teazle*, Mrs. Stuart; *Mrs. Candour*, Mrs. Russell; *Maria*, Miss Sylvia; followed by the farce of "A Nabob for an Hour:" *Sam Hobbs*, Mr. H. Placide; *Dick Dumpy*, Mr. T. Placide. January 10th, the comedy of "Speed the Plough" was played: *Sir Abel Handy*, Mr. H. Placide; *Sir Philip Blandford*, Mr. Webb; *Bob Handy*, Mr. Ludlow; *Henry*, Mr. Roberts; *Farmer Ashfield*, Mr. T. Placide; *Miss Blandford*, Mrs. Stuart; *Lady Handy*, Mrs. Caulfield; *Susan Ashfield*, Miss Sylvia; *Dame Ashfield*, Mrs. Russell; after which the farce of "The Anatomist:" *Monsieur Le Medicin*, Mr. H. Placide; *Crispin*, Mr. T. Placide. January 12th, Shakespeare's play of the "Comedy of Errors:" the *Two Dromios* by the two Placides; after which was played the farce of "Secret Service," in which Mr. H. Placide personated *Michael Perrin*; Mrs. Stuart, *Theresa*. January 13th, the performance consisted of the "Double-bedded Room," in which Mr. H. Placide played *Dulcimer Pipes*, afterwards *Grandfather Whitehead*, followed by "Secret Service." January 14th, performance, "Comedy of Errors," "Uncle John," and "Mr. and Mrs. White:" *Peter White*, Mr. T. Placide. January 15th, benefit of Mr. H. Placide, performance, "London Assurance:" *Sir Harcourt Courtly*, Mr. H. Placide; *Dazzle*, Mr. Ludlow; *Max Harkaway*, Mr. Webb; *Meddle*, Mr. T. Placide; *Charles Courtly*, Mr. Roberts; *Spanker*, Mr. Marks; *Lady Gay Spanker*, Miss Ellis, for one night only; *Grace Harkaway*, Mrs. Stuart; *Pert*, Miss Sylvia; concluding with the "Comedy of Errors." January 16th, first night of Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Field; performance, "Don Caesar De Bazan:" *Don Caesar*, Mr. Field; *Don José*, Mr. Webb; *Charles II. of Spain*, Roberts; *Maritana*, Mrs. Field. The farce was "The Artful Dodger:" *Timothy Dodge*, Mr. Field. January 17th, "La Tour de Nesle" was performed. Mr. Conner, who was engaged for a few nights, made his appearance in *Buridan*; Mrs. Stuart performed *Marguerette*. Followed by the farce of "Boots at the Swan," in which Mr. Field played *Frank Friskey*; Mr. T. Placide, *Earwig*. January 19th, Mr. Hackett began an engagement, open-

ing in *Falstaff*, in the "First Part of Henry IV." This play was produced with a remarkably strong cast, as follows: *Prince of Wales*, Mr. Field; *Hotspur*, Mr. Conner; *Francis*, Mr. Skerrett; *King Henry IV.*, Mr. Webb; *Poins*, Mr. Ludlow; *Earl Douglas*, Mr. Roberts; *Prince John*, Miss Sylvia; *Bardolph*, Mr. Marks; *Lady Percy*, Mrs. Stuart; *Dame Quickly*, Mrs. Russell. This was followed by the farce of "A Lover by Proxy:" *Harry Lawless*, Mr. Field; *Squib*, Mr. Skerrett; *Kate Bromley*, Mrs. Skerrett. January 20th, second night of Mr. Hackett, when was performed "The Kentuckian," in which Mr. Hackett played *Colonel Nimrod Wildfire*; followed by the play of "Don Cæsar de Bazan:" *Don Cæsar*, Mr. Field; *Maritana*, Mrs. Field. The performance concluded with the farce of "The Four Sisters," in which Mr. Skerrett and Mrs. Skerrett played the principal characters. January 21st, "The Merry Wives of Windsor" was produced, with a very strong cast: *Falstaff*, Mr. Hackett; *Master Ford*, Mr. Conner; *Master Slender*, Mr. Ludlow; *Justice Shallow*, Mr. Skerrett; *Mr. Page*, Mr. Roberts; *Dr. Caius*, Mr. Marks; *Mrs. Ford*, Mrs. Stuart; *Mrs. Page*, Mrs. Skerrett; *Anne Page*, Miss Sylvia. After which came "Nicholas Nickleby," in which Mr. Field played *Mantolina*; Mr. Skerrett, *Squeers*; Mr. Caulfield, *Newman Noggs*; Mrs. Field, *Smike*; Miss Sylvia, *Madame Mantolina*; Mrs. Russell, *Mrs. Squeers*. Concluding with "The Artful Dodger." January 22d, the performance began with the comedy of "His Last Legs," in which Mr. Hackett played *O' Callaghan*; followed by the petit comedy of "Richelieu in Love," in which Mr. Field enacted the *Duke of Buckingham*; Mr. Conner, *Cardinal Richelieu*; Mr. Roberts, *Prince Charles of England*; Mrs. Field, *Queen Anne d'Autriche*. This was followed by the farce of "Monsieur Tonson:" *Mons. Morbleu*, Mr. Hackett. January 23d, "Henry IV." was repeated, with the same cast as before. The farce of "Turning the Tables" concluded the evening's performance: *Jeremiah Bumps*, Mr. Field; *Jack Humphries*, Mr. Skerrett. January 24th, the benefit and last appearance of Mr. Hackett, the performance beginning with "Rip Van Winkle," in which Mr. Hackett personated *Rip*; followed by "Mons. Mallet." The performance concluded with "His Last Legs:" *O' Callaghan*, Mr. Hackett. January 26th, benefit of Mr. J. M. Field, when two original pieces were produced, written by Mr. Field; the first being a comedy called "Foreign and Native," the second a musical *jeu-d'esprit*, entitled "Oregon, or the Disputed Territory." The characters of this comedy were

cast as follows: *Brian Brallagan*, alias *Mr. Jigg* (Washington correspondent of the *Town Talk*), alias the *Earl of Derry Down*, writing a book of travels, Mr. Field; *Mr. Flare* ("What d'ye think of our country"), Mr. Skerrett; *Colonel Smith Dummers*, a distinguished financier, Mr. Russell; *Lord Warrington*, a noble of American birth, but of foreign growth, Mr. Roberts; *Hon. Brake Westwood*, a member of Congress from the West, Mr. Webb; *Mr. Vernon*, a Virginian, Mr. Ryner; *Topps*, *Lord Warrington's* "tiger," Mr. Duffey; *Tapis*, *Lord Warrington's* valet, Mr. Marks; *Checques*, cashier of the bank, Mr. King; *Virginia*, a daughter of the Old Dominion, Mrs. Field; *Mrs. Flare*, an anxious mother, Mrs. Russell; *Laura*, her accomplished child, Mrs. Skerrett. In "Oregon," Mr. Skerrett personated *John Bull*; Mr. J. M. Field, *Monsieur Crapeau*; Mr. Russell, *Uncle Sam*; Mrs. Stuart, *The Goddess of Liberty*; Mrs. J. M. Field, *Texas*; Mrs. Skerrett, *Oregon*; Miss Sylvia, *California*; Mrs. Russell, *Massachusetts*.

Sketch of incidents: *The Goddess of Liberty* discovered, the States of the Union in attendance; admission of *Texas*; *Old Massachusetts*, reluctant. *John Bull* and *Monsieur Crapeau* relinquish their hopes, and *John* turns his attention to *Oregon*, who enters clothed in a mixture of American and British emblems. Air: "'Tis a poor distressed damsel as ever you did see. Of my half-and-half condition I'm sick confoundedly;" *John Bull* asserts his claim; *Uncle Sam* interposes; *John* proposes arbitration. "No, sir!" Preparations for hostilities!

"Pray, Johnny, please to moderate the nature of your claims." *California* charges *John* with a design upon her. The States propose a dance to *John Bull*, *Uncle Sam* playing the fiddle. They give him a touch of the Polk-a! *John* agrees to the extension of the "area of freedom," and (finding he can't help it) consents to a settlement of the Oregon Difficulties! Finale — "God save our happy land."

The entertainments of the evening concluded with the farce of "The Critic;" *Puff*, Mr. Field.

January 27th, benefit of Mr. Skerrett, with a powerful cast of the comedy of "Town and Country:" *Reuben Glenroy*, Mr. Conner; *Captain Glenroy*, Mr. Roberts; *Kit Cosey*, Mr. Ludlow; *Jackey Hawbuck*, Mr. Skerrett; *Trot*, Mr. Marks; *Hon. Mrs. Glenroy*, Mrs. Stuart; *Rosalie Somers*, Mrs. Field; *Mrs. Moreen*, Mrs. Russell. After which the petit comedy of the "Wind-mill:" *Sampson Low*, Mr. Skerrett; *Marian*, Mrs. Skerrett; concluding with the

farce of "A Lover by Proxy:" *Squib*, Mr. Skerrett; *Kate Bromley*, Mrs. Skerrett.

January 28th, benefit of Mrs. J. M. Field. The programme began with a play, translated and adapted from the French by Mr. J. M. Field, entitled "Gabrielle, or the Hazards of a Night:" *Marquis de la Prie*, Mr. Conner; *Chevalier d'Aubigny*, Mr. Field; *Mdlle. de Belle Isle*, Mrs. Field. After which was played "Somebody Else:" *Hans Moritz*, Mr. Skerrett; *Minnie*, Mrs. Skerrett. This was followed by "Nicholas Nickleby," cast as before; the performance concluding with "Oregon," cast as before.

January 29th, Mr. Henry Placide, being reëngaged for five nights, appeared as *Sir Peter Teazle*, in "School for Scandal;" *Joseph Surface*, Mr. Webb; *Charles Surface*, Mr. Ludlow; *Crabtree*, Mr. Skerrett; *Sir Benjamin Backbite*, Mr. Field; *Moses*, Mr. Marks; *Lady Teazle*, Mrs. Stuart; *Mrs. Candour*, Mrs. Russell; after which the farce of "Turning the Tables:" *Jeremiah Bumps*, Mr. Field; *Jack Humphries*, Mr. Skerrett. January 30th, Mr. Conner's benefit, when was performed Byron's tragedy of "Werner, or the Inheritance:" *Werner*, Mr. Conner; *Ulric*, Mr. Field; *Gabor*, Mr. Webb; *Idenstein*, Mr. Skerrett; *Josephine*, Mrs. Stuart; *Ida Strahlenheim*, Mrs. Field; after which the farce of "Somebody Else;" concluding with "Oregon." January 31st, Boucicault's comedy of "West End," cast as follows: *Sir William Daventry*, Mr. H. Placide; *Percy Ardent*, Mr. Field; *Mr. Bellamy Fuss*, Mr. Skerrett; *Lady Daventry*, Mrs. Stuart; *Norah O'Connor*, Mrs. Field. After this the farce of "Critic:" *Puff*, Mr. Field. February 2d, Douglas Jerrold's comedy, "Time Works Wonders," was produced, with the following cast: *Goldthumb*, Mr. H. Placide; *Felix Goldthumb*, Mr. Roberts; *Sir Gilbert Norman*, Mr. Webb; *Professor Truffles*, Mr. Skerrett; *Bessy Tulip*, Mrs. Skerrett; *Florentine*, Mrs. Field; after which the farce of "The Double-bedded Room:" *Mr. Dulcimer Pipes*, Mr. H. Placide. February 3d, the performance was "Grandfather Whitehead," "Uncle John," and the "Four Sisters;" Mr. H. Placide appeared in the first and second. February 4th, "Time Works Wonders," followed by "Bombastes Furioso," in both of which Mr. H. Placide appeared. February 5th, farewell benefit of Mr. H. Placide, Coleman's comedy of "The Poor Gentleman:" *Dr. Ollapod*, Mr. H. Placide; *Sir Robert Bramble*, Mr. Skerrett; *Lieut. Worthington*, Mr. Webb; *Emily Worthington*, Mrs. Field; *Miss Lucretia*

MacTab, Mrs. Russell; concluding with the farce of "The Double-bedded Room;" *Mr. Dulcimer Pipes*, Mr. Placide.

Mr. Hackett played a farewell engagement in Mobile, commencing on February 6th, when he acted *Falstaff*, in the "Merry Wives of Windsor;" *Master Ford* was performed by Mr. Webb; *Master Slender*, Mr. Ludlow; *Justice Shallow*, Mr. Skerrett; *Mr. Page*, Mr. Roberts; *Doctor Caius*, Mr. Marks; *Mrs. Ford*, Mrs. Stuart; *Mrs. Page*, Mrs. Skerrett; *Anne Page*, Miss Sylvia; *Dame Quickly*, Mrs. Russell. February 7th, Mr. Hackett played *Rip Van Winkle*, and *O'Callaghan*, in "His Last Legs." February 9th, *Sir Pertinax McSycophant*, in the "Man of the World." February 10th, *Pierce O'Hara*, in the "Irish Attorney," and *Monsieur Mallet*. February 11th, benefit of Mr. Hackett, "Merry Wives of Windsor" and the "Man of the World" were played. February 12th, benefit of Mrs. Skerrett, "Time Works Wonders," in which Mr. Chippendale played *Goldthumb*; Mrs. Skerrett, *Bessie Tulip*; Mrs. J. M. Field, *Florentine*. After which was played "Somebody Else;" followed by Mr. Field's dramatic sketch of "Oregon." About this time Mr. Sol. Smith, being in Mobile on business, played a few nights, opening on the 16th of February, in the part of *Gregory Redtail*, in the farce of "Turn Out." On February 17th he played *Philip Garbois*, in "102." February 18th, he appeared as *Doctor Squills*, in the farce of "Animal Magnetism." February 19th, he played *Thomas*, in the "Secret." February 20th, he appeared as the *Great Unknown*, in Mr. Field's burlesque called "Buy it, Dear."

Niblo's celebrated Acrobat Family, having been engaged for six nights, appeared on February 21st. The price of admission having been reduced at the commencement of the season to fifty cents for the best seats, was now restored to the original rate of \$1 per ticket. The acrobats went through their engagement of six nights, with the assistance of a good dramatic company, to well-filled houses, thus demonstrating, that *muscle* is worth more than *brains*. On March 2d, Mrs. Anna Cora Mowatt, who at this time had acquired some reputation as an actress, having performed in New York to crowded houses, made her first appearance in Mobile. After the success of the acrobats, the managers ventured to continue the price of admission at the same rates as during their engagement. Mr. W. H. Crisp made his first appearance in Mobile with Mrs. Mowatt, being engaged by her to play with her in her pieces. Mrs. Mowatt opened in the character of *Pauline*, in the "Lady of Lyons," Mr. Crisp performing

Claude Melnotte. March 3d, Kotzebue's play of "The Stranger:" *Mrs. Haller*, Mrs. Mowatt; *Stranger*, Mr. Crisp. After which the farce of "Raising the Wind," in which Mr. Crisp performed *Jeremy Diddler*. March 4th, "Lady of Lyons" repeated. March 5th, "Bride of Lammermoor:" *Lucy Ashton*, Mrs. Mowatt; *Edgar Ravenswood*, Mr. Crisp; concluding with "Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady:" *Duchess de Terra Nueva*, Mrs. Mowatt; *Ruy Gomez*, Mr. Crisp. March 6th, "Hunchback," *Julia*, Mrs. Mowatt; *Sir Thomas Clifford*, Mr. Crisp. After which the Farce of "Used Up," in which Mr. Crisp played *Sir Charles Coldstream*.

March 7th, "Honeymoon:" *Juliana*, Mrs. Mowatt; *Duke Aranza*, Mr. Crisp; the farce of "Raising the Wind." March 9th, benefit of Mrs. Mowatt, when was performed "Romeo and Juliet:" *Juliet*, Mrs. Mowatt; *Nurse*, Mrs. Russell; *Romeo*, Mr. Crisp; *Mercutio*, Mr. Ludlow; *Tybalt*, Mr. Flemming; after which the farce of "Used Up," as before. Mrs. Mowatt was re-engaged, and appeared on March 10th in the "Bride of Lammermoor" and "Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady." March 11th, "Love's Sacrifice:" *Margaret Elmore*, Mrs. Mowatt; *Herminie*, Mrs. Skerrett; *St. Lo*, Mr. Crisp; *Mathew Elmore*, Mr. Flemming; *Jean Ruse*, Mr. Skerrett; concluding with the farce of the "Weathercock:" *Tristram Fickle*, Mr. Crisp. March 12th, "Jane Shore:" *Jane Shore*, Mrs. Mowatt; *Alicia*, Mrs. Stuart; *Lord Hastings*, Mr. Crisp; *Duke of Gloster*, Mr. Flemming; concluding with "Katharine and Petruchio:" *Katharine*, Mrs. Mowatt; *Petruchio*, Mr. Crisp. March 13th, repetition of "Love's Sacrifice," as before; farce of "Fortune's Frolic," in which Mr. T. Placide played *Robin Roughhead*. March 14th, Arnold's comedy of "Man and Wife:" *Helen Worrett*, Mrs. Mowatt; *Fanny*, Mrs. J. M. Field; *Charles Austencourt*, Mr. Crisp; *Falkner*, Mr. Flemming; *Sir Willoughby Worrett*, Mr. Chippendale; *Cornelius O'Dedimus*, Mr. Tuthill; *Ponder*, Mr. T. Placide. March 16th, "The Wife:" *Marianna*, Mrs. Mowatt; *Julian St. Pierre*, Mr. Crisp; *Ferardo*, Mr. Flemming; *Leonardo de Gonzago*, Mr. Roberts; concluding with the farce of "Robert Macaire:" *Robert Macaire*, Mr. Crisp; *Jacques Strop*, Mr. T. Placide; *Marie*, Mrs. Stuart. March 17th, benefit of Mr. W. H. Crisp, the "School for Scandal:" *Lady Teazle*, Mrs. Mowatt; *Mrs. Candour*, Mrs. Stuart; *Maria*, Mrs. Field; *Lady Sneerwell*, Mrs. Russell; *Charles Surface*, Mr. Crisp; *Sir Peter Teazle*, Mr. Chippendale; *Sir Oliver Surface*, Mr. Tuthill; *Joseph Surface*, Mr. Flemming; *Crabtree*, Mr. T. Placide;

after which the farce of "Loan of a Lover:" *Peter Spyke*, Mr. T. Placide; *Gertrude*, Mrs. Skerrett. This was the last night of Mrs. Mowatt and Mr. Crisp's engagement. March 18th, farewell benefit of Mrs. Skerrett, when the performance began with the play of "Time Works Wonders," and concluded with the farce of the "Lost Letter." March 19th, benefit of Mr. H. J. Conway, stage-manager of the theatre; first piece, the "Maid of Croissy," after which the drama of the "Golden Farmer." March 20th, benefit of Mrs. Stuart, the performance commencing with Lewis's tragedy of "Adelgitha," in which *Michael Ducas*, was performed by Mr. Ludlow; *Robert Guiscard*, Mr. Flemming; *Lothair*, Mr. Roberts; *Adelgitha*, Mrs. Stuart; *Inma*, Mrs. J. M. Field; after which the farce of the "Three Wives of Madrid." March 21st, benefit of Mr. T. Placide, when was produced the grand Eastern spectacle called "Thalaba, or the Destroyer." The entertainment concluded with the "Swiss Cottage," in which Mr. Placide played *Natz Tyke*. March 23d, first night of the engagement of Mr. Charles Kean, and Mrs. Charles Kean (late Miss Ellen Tree). On this occasion Moore's tragedy of the "Gamester" was performed: *Mr. Beverly*, Mr. Kean; *Mrs. Beverly*, Mrs. Kean; *Charlotte*, Mrs. Field; *Stukely*, Mr. Webb; *Lewson*, Mr. Ludlow; after which the "Swiss Cottage." March 24th, the "Hunchback:" *Sir Thomas Clifford*, Mr. Kean; *Master Walter*, Mr. Webb; *Master Modus*, Mr. Ludlow; *Julia*, Mrs. Kean; *Helen*, Mrs. J. M. Field. March 25th, "Macbeth" was performed: *Macbeth*, Mr. Kean; *Macduff*, Mr. Webb; *Banquo*, Mr. Clark; *Lady Macbeth*, Mrs. Kean. March 26th, Shakespeare's comedy of "Much Ado About Nothing," in which Mr. Kean played *Benedick*; Mr. T. Placide, *Dogberry*; Mrs. Kean, *Beatrice*; Mrs. Field, *Hero*. March 27th, "The Merchant of Venice:" *Shylock*, Mr. Kean; *Bassanio*, Mr. Webb; *Gratiano*, Mr. Ludlow; *Launcelot Gobbs*, Mr. Placide; *Portia*, Mrs. Kean; *Nerissa*, Mrs. Skerrett; *Jessica*, Mrs. Field. March 28th, "The Gamester" was repeated, cast as before; after which the petit comedy of the "Follies of a Night," in which Mr. Kean personated the *Duke de Chartres* and Mrs. Kean the *Duchesse de Chartres*. March 30th, Shakespeare's comedy of "As You Like It:" *Jacques*, Mr. Kean; *Duke*, Mr. Webb; *Orlando*, Roberts; *Touchstone*, Mr. T. Placide; *Rosalind*, Mrs. Kean; *Celia*, Mrs. Stuart; *Audry*, Mrs. Russell. March 31st, "The Stranger" was performed: *Stranger*, Mr. Kean; *Baron Steinfort*, Webb; *Francis*, Mr. Roberts; *Peter*, Mr. T. Pla-

cide; *Solomon*, Mr. Caulfield; *Mrs. Haller*, Mrs. Kean; *Countess Wintersen*, Mrs. Stuart. After which the comedy of "The Wonder, or A Woman Keeps a Secret:" *Don Felix*, Mr. Kean; *Col. Britton*, Mr. Clarke; *Lessardo*, Mr. T. Placide; *Donna Violante*, Mrs. Kean; *Donna Isabella*, Mrs. Stuart. April 1st, Sergeant Talford's tragedy of "Ion, or the Fate of Argos:" *Ion*, Mrs. Kean; *Adrastus*, Mr. Kean; *Agenor*, Mr. Webb; *Clemantha*, Mrs. J. M. Field. April 2d, "Hamlet" was performed: *Hamlet*, Mr. Kean; *Ghost*, Mr. Webb; *Laertes*, Mr. Roberts; *Polonius*, Mr. Clark; *1st Grave-digger*, Mr. T. Placide; *Ophelia*, Mrs. Kean; *Queen*, Mrs. Stuart. This performance was for the benefit of Mr. Ludlow, Mr. and Mrs. Kean volunteering their services on this occasion. April 3d, "Lady of Lyons:" *Claude Melnotte*, Mr. Kean; *Pauline*, Mrs. Kean; *Madame Deschapelles*, Mrs. Russell. April 4th, farewell benefit of Mr. and Mrs. Kean, on which occasion was performed "Ion," with the former cast, and "The Honeymoon:" *Duke Aranza*, Mr. Kean; *Rolando*, Mr. Ludlow; *Jacques* (the Mock Duke), Sol. Smith; *Juliana*, Mrs. Kean; *Volante*, Mrs. Stuart; *Zamora*, Mrs. J. M. Field. April 6th, benefit of Mr. Webb, when was performed "Rob Roy:" *Rob Roy*, Mr. Webb; *Bailie Nicol Jarvie*, Mr. Chippendale; *Helen Macgregor*, by Miss Sylvia, who undertook the part at short notice, in consequence of the illness of Mrs. Stuart; *Diana Vernon*, Mrs. Skerrett. The farce was "Dr. Dillworth," in which Mr. Chippendale performed *Dr. Dillworth*; Mr. T. Placide, *Syntax*. April 7th was performed, for the first time in Mobile, Mrs. Mowatt's comedy of "Fashion." Miss Petrie appeared for the first time this season in Mobile, in the part of *Gertrude*, in "Fashion;" *Seraphina Tiffany*, Mrs. Field; *Mrs. Tiffany*, Mrs. Russell; *Adam Trueman*, Mr. Chippendale; *Count De Jolimaitre*, Mr. Clark; *Col. Howard*, Mr. Roberts; *Mr. Snobson*, Mr. T. Placide; after which the farce of the "Two Gregories:" *Gregory*, Mr. T. Placide; *Fanchette*, Miss Petrie. April 8th, the comedy of "Fashion" was repeated, with the same cast as before; after which was the farce of the "Lady and the Devil:" *Wildlove*, Mr. Clark; *Jeremy*, Mr. T. Placide; *Zephyrina*, Miss Petrie. April 9th, benefit of Mr. Roberts, on which occasion "Richard III." was performed: *Richard*, Mr. Roberts; *Duke of Richmond*, Mr. Clark; *Queen*, Mrs. J. M. Field; *Lady Anne*, Miss Petrie; concluding with the farce of "A Roland for an Oliver:" *Sir Mark Chase*, Mr. Chippendale; *Fixture*, Mr. T. Placide; *Maria Darlington*, Miss

Petrie. April 10th, benefit of Mr. H. J. Conway, the stage-manager, and the last night of the season, on which occasion was performed the comedy of "Fashion," with the same cast as before; followed by "The Carnival Ball, or One Hour on Trial." At the close of the theatre for this season the manager and company took their departure for St. Louis.

Before closing my account of this Mobile season, I wish to relate an occurrence that transpired on the opening night of the engagement of Mr. and Mrs. Kean in that city, somewhat ludicrous in its character, yet disagreeable in its effects to at least one of the party connected with it. The opening play was the tragedy of "The Gamester." As the curtain fell at the close of this tragedy, a very extraordinary and unnecessary exhibition of temper was displayed by Mr. Kean, at which I was somewhat surprised. The leader of our orchestra was a German, who, although an excellent musician, was entirely inexperienced as leader of orchestra. He was a resident of the city, whom we had lately been obliged to employ in that capacity, our leader engaged at the commencement of the season having suddenly deserted us. This man had on a previous night played the music of a melodrama, at the close of which a certain prominent character, while dying, had a slow piece of solemn music to assist his expiring agonies. The leader and his fellow-musicians were sitting in the orchestra, very deeply absorbed by the closing scene at *Mr. Beverly's* death, and as the bell sounded and the curtain commenced slowly to descend, a sudden thought seemed to flash across his mind that some slow music would increase the effect, and he gave Mr. Kean the full benefit of that thought. He instantly seized his violin, and calling in an undertone to his fellows, they commenced a solemn, dirge-like piece of music, and to this the curtain dropped. The audience did not appear to observe any thing wrong in this movement, but gave the usual applause, evincing their deep interest in the performance. As soon as the curtain had struck the stage Mr. Kean sprang to his feet, and in a furious manner commenced abusing the musicians, the theatre, and its management; and when I ventured to expostulate, and explain that it had occurred through the leader's zeal and ignorance, he was not unsparing in disagreeable remarks directed at me personally. This I excused, on reflection, as the incident was certainly very annoying.

While making some personal remarks in regard to Mr. Charles Kean, I shall extend them a little further, and relate an incident that surprised me more than the one previously recorded. Mr. Kean, although a strict disciplinarian in stage

business, and a gentleman of liberal education, was not without faults, and those of magnitude. I shall venture to relate one instance of the kind. In this same tragedy of "The Gamester," and on the same night as the incident before spoken of, in order to strengthen the cast of the play, I had put myself in the character of *Lewson*, a third-rate part in the play, having a very good representative of *Stukely*, the second part, in Mr. Charles Webb. *Lewson* is the true friend of *Beverly*, the character represented by Mr. Kean, but the latter's mind had been poisoned against him by *Stukely*. As *Beverly* is wandering in the streets at midnight, having just gambled away not only his money, but his wife's jewels, on which he had borrowed the lost money, he is encountered by *Lewson*, both being armed with swords at their sides, according to the custom of the time represented. The following dialogue then takes place: —

Lewson. — Beverly! well met; I have been busy in your affairs.

Beverly. — So I have heard, sir, and now I must thank you as I ought.

Lewson. — To-morrow I may deserve your thanks. Late as it is, I go to Bates. Discoveries are making that an arch-villain trembles at.

Beverly. — Discoveries are made, sir, that you shall tremble at. Where is this boasted spirit, this high demeanor, that was to call me to account? You say I have wronged my sister. Now say as much; but first be ready for defence, as I am for resentment.

Lewson. — What mean you? I understand you not!

Beverly. — The coward's stale acquaintance, who, when he spreads foul calumny abroad, and dreads just vengeance on him, cries out, "What mean you? I understand you not!"

Had Mr. Charles Kean been an uneducated man, or a careless actor, I should perhaps have not been surprised at a gross blunder committed by him in following and adopting a typographical error to be found in one, perhaps more, of the English copies of the tragedy of "The Gamester." But for a reputed graduate of Eton College, and an actor demanding the strictest stage discipline, to be guilty of such a blunder, I must confess did surprise me. The error I refer to is using the word "acquaintance" instead of the word "acquittance." The latter makes sense, and the former nonsense of the sentence. It is very evident that Mr. Kean studied the words contained in Jones & Co.'s London edition of 1828, which contains the error referred to; the error is corrected in the American editions of the play. It was the opening play of the engagement of Mr. and Mrs. Kean in Mobile, and although I was on the stage with Mr. Kean, and within six feet of him, I thought that perhaps I had not heard him correctly; but on a repetition of the play a few nights afterwards, I distinctly heard him repeat the same word.

This carelessness of Mr. Kean, or any thing else you may please to call it, seems to have been inherited ; for Mr. William B. Wood, the old Philadelphia manager, in his "Recollections of the Stage," relates a similar instance of carelessness in the father of Mr. Kean, the renowned Edmund Kean. It seems that Mr. Wood, in a private conversation with the elder Kean, called his attention to an error he made in the use of a certain word or words, when Mr. Kean, after reflecting, simply replied, "Well, I have always read it so," meaning as he had read it that night.

While speaking of the irascible temper of Mr. Charles Kean, I would wish the reader to understand that I entertain no hostile feeling towards the memory of that gentleman. As a proof of this, I will here insert an anecdote wherein he displayed much good sense and a gentlemanly appreciation of a good joke intended to be at his expense, but which was foiled and its point broken by his admirable tact and prompt wit. During the engagement just recorded of Mr. and Mrs. Kean in Mobile, there was a young man, a member of my company, filling a very subordinate situation, his name appearing in the play-bills of the night as Mr. King. That, however, was not his real name. This young man was a printer by trade, had a small stock of wit and a large share of brass. It appears, as related to me, that at the rehearsal of "*Macbeth*," Mr. Kean, who was very particular in his stage directions, remarked to King, who was to do one of the officers who brings on a report to *Macbeth* in the last act, "When you enter, sir, I desire that you will not speak until you get the precise cue from me. I sometimes make what you might deem a long pause, but do not imagine I am imperfect, sir. I will give you the proper cue. Therefore, please do not speak until you get it, else you may mar my business." To this elaborate direction King listened in silence ; then, lifting his hat and bowing, said, "I shall remember, sir." This conversation was the subject of some remarks among the young men afterwards, and the matter passed away from their memories. Two or three nights afterwards, the "*Merchant of Venice*" was the play for the night, Mr. King in the cast for *Salanio*, having but a few lines to speak. At the morning rehearsal, in the scene where *Salanio* and *Solarino* enter to *Shylock* (Mr. Kean) to inform him of the flight of his daughter with her lover,—in the midst of that excited scene of *Shylock*,—King addressed Mr. Kean thus : "I beg your pardon, Mr. Kean, but I wish to observe to you that I am very perfect in my part. I make long pauses sometimes, but do not imagine that I am at a loss for the words.

I'll give you the cue, so please do not speak until you get the precise word; if you do, you will spoil my scene." This was too much for the by-standers; they could not refrain from a loud laugh, but King kept a sober, steady phiz, as somebody says in a play. But Mr. Kean saw the joke intended, and turned its point splendidly; taking off his hat, and bowing with much humility, he said, "I shall remember, sir." A clapping of hands arose from the actors from the side-scenes, and the scene closed in good humor all around. I was not present at either of the rehearsals spoken of, but it was told to me in substance about as I have set it down.

This young man, fifteen or twenty years afterwards, was well-known as William H. C. King, a noted politician, editor, and theatrical manager, who died at Pass Christian, Mississippi, September 12, 1868.

When the war commenced between the Northern and Southern States of our country, in 1861, Mr. King was in the newspaper office of the *Crescent City*. After the occupancy of the city by the Federal troops, the office of the *Crescent City* was confiscated. A difficulty arose between Mr. King and one of the printers; the latter assaulted Mr. King in a violent manner, and in conclusion was killed by him. For this Mr. King stood a trial, and was honorably acquitted by a jury of his fellow-citizens, as it was clearly shown on the trial that he had slain the man in defence of his own life. Mr. King was at one time proprietor and manager of the theatre that stood on Gravier Street, and was then known as the Gaieties Theatre. At the time of his death, Mr. King was sole proprietor of the newspaper known as the *Times*, of the city of New Orleans.

At the close of our season, in April, Mr. and Mrs. Skerrett left us and returned to the North, and never after visited the South. I know but little of the antecedents of Mr. Skerrett and his amiable lady, and can only impart what I learn from that excellent theatrical work of Mr. J. P. Ireland, "*The New York Stage*," as follows: *Mr. George Skerrett was born in England or Scotland, I am not sure which. He was inferior to many well-known comedians, but nevertheless respectable in his line.* He was for years affected with a bronchial irritation, which seriously marred his professional efforts, and finally resulted in consumption, of which he expired at Albany, New York, on the 16th of May, 1855. He made his first appearance in America at the Park Theatre, New York, September 14, 1844, as *Dominique*, in the melodramatic extravaganza of "*Dominique, the Deserter*." Mrs. Skerrett was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1817, and made her *début* in

early childhood, as *Tom Thumb*. Her first appearance in America was at the Park Theatre, September 3, 1844, in the farce of "Matrimony," as *Clara*, to Mr. James R. Anderson's *Delaval*. She played this character well, but far exceeded it on the same evening as *Gertrude*, in the "Loan of a Lover." In a certain class of soubrettes, rustics, and mischievous boys, she has been particularly charming,—witness her *Minnie*, in "Somebody Else," in which she has remained entirely unrivalled. Entirely deficient in the expression of pathos or passion, she hit off the innocent simplicity of *Jessie Oatland*, and *Cecily Homespun*, with telling effect, and the gayety and intrigue of *Helen Worrett* and *Miss Hardcastle* has seldom been excelled on our stage. Mrs. Skerrett was still living in 1878, and had a daughter on the stage, said to be a clever actress. Mrs. Skerrett's style of acting was after the school of Madame Vestris, and although lively and interesting, was not as pointed and piquant as Mrs. Keely, also of the Vestris school.

Before closing my account of the seasons of 1845–6 at New Orleans and Mobile, I would wish to make a few remarks on a very excellent and versatile actor who appeared on our boards only during the engagement of Mrs. Mowatt. I refer to Mr. W. H. Crisp, who ably supported that lady during her engagements of this year. Mr. Crisp was well known afterwards in Mobile, New Orleans, and many of the smaller cities of the South and West. William H. Crisp was born in England, about the year 1820. His early theatrical career commenced in Edinburgh, Scotland. Finally he got to Dublin, where he was considered rather a clever young actor in light comedy. He married about that time, and himself and wife came to America in the summer of 1844, and both made their first appearance on this continent in the city of New York, at the Park Theatre. Mr. Crisp appeared September 30, 1844, in the character of *Jeremy Diddler*, in the farce of "Raising the Wind," and Mrs. Crisp, October 13th following, as *Lady Gay Spanker*, in the comedy of "London Assurance." The lady made the better impression of the two. June 13, 1845, Mr. Crisp played *Claude Melnotte* to the *Pauline* of Mrs. Mowatt, who made her first appearance on the New York stage on that occasion, in Bulwer's "Lady of Lyons." In 1856, directly following the conclusion of the theatrical season which terminated in April, and was the last one that was begun but not concluded under the management of Joseph M. Field, Mr. Crisp took the Mobile Theatre for a short term. He was not successful there, and soon relinquished the theatre and went

into Georgia and South Carolina. In 1855 or 1856, Mr. Crisp had the management of the first Varieties Theatre of New Orleans, where he remained for two seasons, and afterwards resumed his peregrinations in South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama, finally making his home in Texas. During the American internecine war of 1861-5, Mr. Crisp served the Southern Confederacy as a captain of artillery. As a theatrical manager, Mr. Crisp was active and energetic, but his energies were, as a general matter, not well directed. As an actor, he was spirited and clever in comedy, without being decidedly great; but his tragic attempts, like those of most comedians, were not remarkable for impressiveness or finish. The New Orleans *Picayune*, in speaking of the death of Mr. William H. Crisp, paid the following tribute to the memory of the deceased comedian: "The stage has lost an actor zealous in pride of vocation, lofty in aspirations, and never unmindful of the duties and amenities which belong to the character of a gentleman." He died early in January, 1874, at the new town of Dallas, in Northern Texas, aged about fifty-four years. Mrs. Crisp died at Waco, Texas, and was buried there.

CHAPTER LIX.

New Orleans Season of 1845-6—J. B. Booth—Miss Clara Ellis—Mr. E. S. Conner—W. H. Chippendale—Mr. and Mrs. Field—J. H. Hackett—H. Placide—Dan Marble—Mrs. Mowatt—Mr. Crisp—Mr. Oxley—Auguste Waldauer—Miss McBride—St. Louis Season of 1846—Mr. and Mrs. Kean—Firemen's Benefit—J. E. Murdock—His Biography—Mr. Silsbee—J. B. Booth—Dan Marble—Sable Harmonists—Miss Turnbull—Bedouin Arabs—Mr. and Mrs. J. Wallack.

THE St. Charles Theatre, New Orleans, opened under the management of Ludlow & Smith, November 18, 1845, with Mr. J. B. Booth, *the great tragedian*, in Coleman's play of the "Iron Chest," in which Mr. Booth appeared as *Sir Edward Mortimer*. This was followed by a grand overture by the orchestra, under the leadership of Mr. C. H. Mueller; followed by a new polka, by Master and Miss Jefferson. This Master Jefferson was Joseph Jefferson, afterwards justly celebrated for his fine performance of *Rip Van Winkle*. On his second night, Mr. Booth enacted *Iago*, Mr. Webb playing *Othello* on that occasion. On his third night, Mr. Booth appeared as *Sir Giles Overreach*, in "A New Way to Pay Old Debts." On his fourth night, he performed *King Lear*; *Edgar*, Mr. Flemming; *Cordelia*, Miss Randolph. On Saturday, 22d of November, Mr. and Mrs. Skerrett, of the English theatres, made their first appearance, in Goldsmith's comedy of "She Stoops to Conquer," as *Tony Lumpkin* and *Miss Hardcastle*; between the play and farce a comic duet, by Master and Miss Jefferson. Sunday, November 23d, Mr. Booth acted *Richard III.* On Monday, 24th, Mr. Booth as *Pescara*, in Shiel's tragedy called "The Apostate;" *Florinda*, Mrs. Farren. Tuesday, 25th, Mr. Booth's benefit, when he performed *Shylock*, in the "Merchant of Venice." In all the characters represented by Mr. Booth in this engagement, *his performance of them was preëminently superior to that of any actor I have ever seen*, and I have witnessed the efforts of every actor of note on this side of the Atlantic. It is true, I never saw the elder Kean in any one of them, except *Richard III.*, and then he played under great disadvantages. Mr. Booth's engagement on this occasion was a success. He was re-engaged for four nights more, and appeared on Wednes-

day evening, November 26th, as *King Lear*. On the 27th, Mr. Booth was advertised to perform *Richard III.*, but he got on one of his occasional unhappy frolics, and did not appear, and other plays had to be substituted. This unfortunate affair created much disgust in New Orleans, and was the cause of a loss to Mr. Booth of many of his admirers. He appeared a few nights after in *Richard III.*, but the attendance was limited, and the audience principally transient people. He left immediately afterwards for Mobile, where he acted through his whole engagement with credit to himself and with admirable effect. November 28th, Miss Clara Ellis appeared in Knowles's play called "The Love Chase," in the character of *Constance*. The next night she acted *Julia*, in the "Hunchback." December 2d, this lady performed *Bianca*, in Milman's "Fazio;" the following night, *Jane Shore*, in Rowe's tragedy of that name. On the 5th, she acted *Mrs. Haller*, in Kotzebue's play of "The Stranger." On the 6th was performed the comedy of "Old Heads and Young Hearts," in which Mr. W. H. Chippendale made his first appearance this season, as *Jesse Rural*; Miss Ellis performing the character of *Lady Alice Hawthorne*. December 7th, Mr. E. S. Conner made his first appearance this season, in *Cardinal Richelieu*." December 8th, Bulwer's "Lady of Lyons:" *Claude Melnotte*, Mr. E. S. Conner; *Pauline*, Miss C. Ellis. December 13th, Shiel's tragedy of "Evadne:" *Colonna*, Mr. Conner; *Evadne*, Miss Ellis. After Mr. Booth had completed his engagement in Mobile, he returned to New Orleans and performed three nights, but his performances were but indifferently attended. The people of New Orleans were very much disgusted and highly displeased by his conduct during the previous engagement.

Immediately following Mr. Booth came Mr. Dan Marble, commencing December 26th, with "Sam Patch in France," and *William*, in the nautical drama of "Black-eyed Susan." He played nine nights, his benefit being his tenth night, which occurred January 4, 1846. In addition to his usual list of plays, Mr. Marble performed during this engagement "Tom Cringle's Log," in which he performed the character of *Tom Cringle*; also *Solon Shingle*, in the "People's Lawyer." Early in January, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Field visited New Orleans, and performed a few nights as "stars." Mrs. Field took a benefit on the 12th of January, producing Mr. Field's own play entitled "Belle Isle," in which his wife and himself performed the two leading characters; the evening concluding with "Nicholas Nickleby:" *Mantilini*, Mr. Field; *Smikey*, Mrs.

Field. January 14th, Mr. Field had a benefit, when was performed his comedy of "Foreign and Native," in which Mr. and Mrs. Field, Mrs. Skerrett, and Mr. Chippendale acted principal characters; following which was played Mr. Field's local sketch called "Oregon, or the Disputed Territory;" the evening concluding with the farce of "Boots at the Swan." January 18th, Mr. Henry Placide, having returned from Mobile, commenced a short engagement with his favorite play of "Grandfather Whitehead." He afterwards enacted the following characters: *Sir Abel Handy*, in "Speed the Plough;" *Dromio of Syracuse*, in the "Comedy of Errors;" *Sam Hobbs*, "Nabob for an Hour;" *Monsieur Perrin*, in "Secret Service;" *Sir William Daventry*, in "West End;" and *Sir Peter Teazle*, in "School for Scandal," for his benefit. He was re-engaged for two nights. Mr. Hackett commenced an engagement January 26th, with *Falstaff*, in "Henry IV." He performed six nights, including his benefit, going through his usual round of characters, to very fair houses in a remunerative point of view. Mr. Dan Marble commenced on the 1st of February, with "Sam Patch, the Jumper of Niagara Falls;" concluding with the nautical drama of "Tom Cringle's Log." He performed nine nights, including his benefit, one of them being for Mr. J. M. Field's benefit, which took place on the 4th of February. On his benefit night, Mr. Marble undertook the character of *Martin Heywood*, in the "Rent Day," but it was not a success; when he delivered the speeches of fine sentiment contained in the character, some of the silly folks laughed, and that caused others to laugh. They had been used to hear nothing but funny sayings from Dan Marble, and they imagined he could not be otherwise than funny. February 10th, Mr. Henry Placide, being in the city, was engaged for one night to appear as *Grandfather Whitehead*. February 11th, Mr. Thomas Placide took a benefit, and his brother Henry performed for him. They appeared together as the two *Dromios*, in the "Comedy of Errors." February 12th, Mrs. Farren had a benefit, when was performed the "Emperor's Command," followed by the burletta of the "Fair One with the Golden Locks," and concluding with "Agnes de Vere." This lady's benefits were always good in New Orleans. February 13th, Mrs. Mowatt commenced an engagement, opening in the "Lady of Lyons," supported by Mr. Crispin *Claude Melnotte*. This lady performed, in all, fourteen nights in this engagement, to a good business. On four of those nights she had the aid of Mr. Henry Placide, who performed *Sir Peter Teazle* to her *Lady Teazle*, *Sir Harcourt*

Courtly to her *Grace Harkaway*, *Sir William Darenty* to her *Nora O'Connor*, repeating *Sir Harcourt* on her last night. February 28th, Mr. Oxley, an American actor, was announced for two nights only. He opened in Sheridan Knowles's tragedy of "*Virginius*," in which he enacted the title rôle, the *Virginia* of the evening being Miss Randolph; after which was performed Shakespeare's "*Comedy of Errors*," with the two *Placides* as the two *Dromios*. March 1st, Coleman's tragic drama of the "*Iron Chest*:" *Sir Edward Mortimer*, Mr. Oxley. This was followed by "*Grandfather Whitehead*," with Mr. Henry Placide in the title rôle. March 2d, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean commenced their engagement, with the tragedy of "*The Gamester*." After this they performed "*Much Ado About Nothing*," "*Macbeth*," "*Hunchback*," "*Merchant of Venice*," "*As You Like It*," "*Romeo and Juliet*," "*Lady of Lyons*," "*Wonder*," "*Stranger*," "*Ion*," and "*Hamlet*." The following plays were repeated by Mr. and Mrs. Kean, viz.: "*Macbeth*," "*Gamester*," "*Hunchback*," "*As You Like It*," and "*Ion*," the latter being performed three nights. "*The Follies of a Night*," "*Honeymoon*," and "*Wonder*" were performed together as secondary pieces. March 23d, Mrs. Mowatt commenced a second engagement, with *Juliet* in "*Romeo and Juliet*." After which she performed *Gertrude*, in her own comedy of "*Fashion*," which was played five nights in succession to full houses. This was followed with her performance of *Margaret Elmore*, in "*Love's Sacrifice*," and on the same night *Charles*, the young King of Spain, in "*Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady*." Next night, *Marianna*, in the play of "*The Wife*." On April 2d, Mrs. Mowatt performed *Margaret Elmore* for Mrs. Farren's benefit, Mrs. Farren enacting *Herminie* on the occasion. On the previous evening, April 1st, Mrs. Mowatt performed *Lucy Ashton*, in the "*Bride of Lammermoor*," and *Portia*, in the "*Merchant of Venice*," for the benefit of Mr. W. M. Flemming, the beneficiary performing *Shylock*. This gentleman, Mr. Flemming, was at that day a remarkably correct and even actor; not at any time particularly brilliant, but never falling below mediocrity. This was, I believe, his only season in our theatre. Mr. Flemming, I think, was in California for a few years; then returned to the Eastern States, in one of which, I think, he was born. He appeared in New York, December 4, 1843, at the Bowery Theatre, in the "*Bronze Horse*," in the character of the *Cloud King*. In June, 1856, he opened Burton's Theatre for a month. Some years afterwards, I believe, he was manager of the Winter

Garden Theatre, Broadway, city of New York, which was conducted by him with respectability and success. I am not certain, but believe he is alive at this present writing.

April 4th, 1846, Mr. James P. Bailey, for many years the treasurer of our theatres, took a benefit; commencing with the then popular drama called "*Ruy Blas*," after which Mr. Waldauer appeared on the stage and played a solo, with variations, on the violin, for which he was greatly applauded. Mr. Waldauer was but little known at that day as a musician, occupying only a secondary position in the orchestra, that of *repetiteur*, Mr. C. H. Mueller being the leader. This is the same Auguste Waldauer so well known and respected in all the cities of the South and West; for many years leader at the Opera-house, St. Louis; president of the Beethoven Conservatory of Music of St. Louis, and conductor of the grand classic concerts of the city. This gentleman possesses remarkable abilities, being a successful author as well as musician. He is the author of "*Fanchon*," one of Maggie Mitchell's most successful plays.

April 6th, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean began a second engagement, commencing with Shakespeare's "*As You Like It*:" *Jacques*, Mr. Kean; *Rosalind*, Mrs. Kean. This was followed on the succeeding nights by "*Ion*," "*Macbeth*," "*Hunchback*," "*Much Ado About Nothing*," "*Merchant of Venice*" and the farce of "*Perfection*," Mrs. Kean performing in the last two pieces; the "*Iron Chest*," finishing with the comedy of "*The Wonder*," compressed into three acts, Mr. and Mrs. Kean appearing in both on the same evening, for their benefit. April 14th, 1846, was the last night of the season, when Mr. and Mrs. Kean performed in the tragedy of "*The Gamester*" and the comedy of "*The Honeymoon*" (condensed), for the managers of the theatre, Sol. Smith's name being put up in behalf of the firm of Ludlow & Smith.

The following persons composed the companies of Ludlow & Smith, in their theatres at New Orleans and Mobile, during the season of 1845-6:—

N. M. Ludlow and Sol. Smith, managers; John M. Weston, stage-manager; James P. Bailey, treasurer; George T. Rowe, prompter; Samuel B. Stockwell, scenic artist; Charles W. Mueller, leader of orchestra; D. T. Ellsworth, machinist.

Male performers — Charles Webb, Edmund S. Conner, W. M. Flemming, J. M. Weston, Joseph M. Field, Wm. Anderson, J. B. Roberts, Mr. Prior, Mr. Clark, George P. Farren, W. H. Chippendale, George Skerrett, Thomas Placide, James S. Wright, John Hickmatt, Albert J. Marks, Richard F.

Russell, Mr. Henry Schoolcraft, Mr. Tuthill, Mr. Caulfield, Mr. Edwards, Mr. Rynor, Mr. Park, Mr. English, Mr. Uhl, Mr. Duffy, Mr. Seymour, Mr. Baker, Mr. Page, Mr. Curtis, Mr. Nunez, Mr. Phillips, W. H. H. King, George Thorp, Mr. Elms, Mr. Fredericks, Joseph Jefferson, Mr. Jones, Mr. Wells, Mr. Williams, Mr. Wigan, George Gorman, Mr. Marston, Mr. Badger, Mr. Krieder, Mr. Benton, Mr. Belden, Mr. Parsons.

Female performers — Mrs. J. M. Field, Mrs. G. P. Farren, Mrs. George Skerrett, Mrs. Mary Stuart, Miss Eliza Petrie, Miss Randolph, Miss C. McBride, Miss Sylvia, Miss Julia Turnbull, Mrs. Russell, Mrs. Caulfield, Mrs. Conner, Mrs. Hubbard, Mrs. G. T. Rowe, Mrs. Mueller, Mrs. Krieder, Mrs. Bowen, Miss Hubbard, Miss C. Jefferson.

These performers were engaged to act in either city, at the option of the management, their travelling expenses paid and salaries not suspended. The above two seasons of New Orleans and Mobile were profitable to the management; more so in the former than the latter city. This difference of profit was the natural result of a large difference in the amount of population in favor of the former. As this was the last year of Miss C. McBride as an actress, I leave on record, with much pleasure, my humble testimony to her amiability of disposition and exemplary life. Miss Cecelia McBride was, I believe, born in Massachusetts, about the year 1807. Her first appearance on the stage was as a dancer, when about fifteen or sixteen years of age. In 1825 she appeared upon the stage of a Boston theatre as an actress, in the personation of *Miss Hardcastle*, in Goldsmith's comedy of "She Stoops to Conquer." It was considered a success at that time. She was young, fresh, and full of hope in the future; but, alas! those hopes were never realized. She made her first appearance in New York at the Park Theatre, June 4, 1838, as *Emma*, in the pretty little drama of the "Youthful Queen;" and although that appearance was considered as a forerunner of future success, yet was she doomed to experience disappointment. In a few years that insidious disease called consumption began to evince its presence, and she was advised to visit the South during the winter months, for the benefit of her health. She followed this advice, after some delay, but it was too late. The fiend had possession of her, and would not loose its grasp. She played her last engagement in the company of Ludlow & Smith; left New Orleans in April, and died in New York, among her friends, June, 1846, esteemed and lamented by all who knew her. At the end of this season, Thomas Pla-

cide and W. M. Flemming left the South and went to New York. W. H. Chippendale also went East.

The St. Louis summer season of 1846 commenced Saturday evening, April 25th, with Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean as the "stars." They opened in the tragedy of "The Gamester." The following Monday they acted in "Much Ado About Nothing." This was succeeded on the next evening by "Macbeth;" concluding with the farce of "The Promissory Note," in which N. M. Ludlow made his first appearance this season, in the character of *Scamper*; *Cecily*, Mrs. Farren. Following on this, they performed "Hunchback," "Merchant of Venice," "As You Like It," "The Stranger" and the farce of "Perfection," "Hamlet," "Iron Chest" and "Honey-moon," "Ion" and the farce of "The Liar:" *Young Wilding*, Mr. N. M. Ludlow; "Lady of Lyons," "Romeo and Juliet:" *Romeo*, Mr. Kean; *Mercutio*, N. M. Ludlow; *Juliet*, Mrs. Kean; *Nurse*, Mrs. Russell. Repeated "Ion;" repeated "Merchant of Venice," with the comedy of "The Wonder" in three acts, with Mr. and Mrs. Kean as *Don Felix* and *Violante*.

Following the engagement of Mr. and Mrs. Kean came the Nun Acrobat Family. On their first night the entertainment commenced with the comedy of "Laugh When You Can:" *George Gossamer*, N. M. Ludlow; *Bonus*, Mr. Farren; *Emily*, Mrs. Farren. Then followed the programme of the acrobats.

On May 18th was presented, for the first time in St. Louis, Mrs. Mowatt's comedy of "Fashion," which was well received, and well attended for a number of nights.

May 19th, a benefit was given for the fund of the Firemen's Association, when a good house was the result. A "Fireman's Address" was spoken by Mr. Farren. The "Rival Soldiers" concluded the evening's amusement; *Nipperkin*, N. M. Ludlow.

June 1st, Mr. James E. Murdock commenced an engagement in *Hamlet*. During his subsequent nights he appeared as *Claude Melnotte*; *Rover*, in "Wild Oats;" and for the farce as *Dashall*, in "My Aunt." This was followed with *Macbeth*; *Pierre*, in "Venice Preserved," and in the farce as *Charles Paragon*, in "Perfection;" next night as *Rolla*, in "Pizarro;" then as *Evelyn*, in Bulwer's comedy of "Money;" then, in the farce, *O'Callahan*, in "His Last Legs;" then *Othello*, the *Stranger*, *Romeo*, and in the farce as *Frederick*, in the "Prince and Watchman."

June 12th, benefit of Mr. Murdock, when was performed the

“Lady of Lyons;” concluding the evening with the three last acts of the “School for Scandal,” in which he performed *Charles Surface*. Mr. Murdock pleased the people, and his engagement was a success. The theatre-goers preferred his tragedy to his comedy; they considered his comedy rather sententious and heavy. I was particularly pleased with Mr. Murdock’s rendition of *Hamlet*. I thought it then, and do still think it, the best representation of the Danish prince that I have ever seen; his readings, his action, his appearance,—in short, his *tout-ensemble* was my *beau idéal* of the character. Much of Mr. Murdock’s career as an actor was passed in the South and West, where he was admired for his talents and highly respected as a gentleman in all associations of private life. A short biographical sketch of this gentleman, I presume, would be acceptable to my readers.

James E. Murdock is a native of Philadelphia, born of highly respectable parents in 1813. In early life he gave his attention to books and dramatic elocution; and overcoming the objection of his friends, came out at the Arch Street Theatre in the fall of 1829, as *Frederick*, in “Lovers’ Vows.” On the 4th of June, 1838, he made his first appearance at the Park Theatre, as *Claude Melnotte*, being engaged to support Miss Ellen Tree. About 1842, Mr. Murdock withdrew from the stage for the purpose of study, and at the same time to give lessons in elocution to students and practitioners of law and divinity in the theological colleges of Newton, Massachusetts, and Bangor, Maine. He also gave a series of lectures on Shakespeare’s characters, in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. On his return to the stage, he made his first appearance in *Hamlet*, at the Park Theatre, October 20, 1845. Mr. Murdock made a visit to England about 1858; but, I believe, did not perform there, the visit being for the benefit of the health of his daughter, and for the purpose of viewing the country and its numerous places and objects of interest. Mr. Murdock was an excellent actor in either tragedy or comedy, both of which he at times performed. In comedy, such characters as *Young Mirabel*, in the “Inconstant;” *Alfred Evelyn*, in “Money;” and *Rover*, in “Wild Oats,”—in short, any character in comedy depending on the good delivery of fine sentiments,—Murdock could give more effect to than any actor I have ever seen. Mr. Murdock possessed a strong, full-toned, clear voice, sonorous but mellowed by discretion; his stature of the medium height, manly and well-defined features, capable of varied and unlimited expression; but he possessed one quality that was a great hindrance in the way of his reach-

ing the topmost niche in the temple of fame, — he was too modest.

Mr. Cornelius Matthews, a well-known critic, of taste and judgment, has said, speaking of Mr. Murdock: "His personal character and professional aims are not only above reproach, but entitled to the best regards of the community for the zeal with which he espouses the reform and elevation of the theatre, which he desires to see purged of all that can offend the strictest judgment and the purest morality." Mr. Murdock has for many years withdrawn from the stage as an actor, but has at various times and places given lectures on the Drama and readings of Shakespeare to delighted audiences.

June 13th, Mr. J. Silsbee commenced an engagement, opening with "Yankee Land" and the "Forest Rose." During this engagement he performed, in addition to the above, "Sam Slick, the Clock Maker," "The Yankee Peddler," "Doolittle Family," "Celestial Empire, or the Yankee in China," "Lady of the Lions," and for his benefit, June 20th, four Yankee pieces, viz.: "The Hard Subject," "Boston Tea-Party," "Yankee Abroad," and "Celestial Empire."

On Monday evening, June 22d, Mr. J. B. Booth commenced an engagement, appearing in the "Iron Chest;" subsequently, "New Way to Pay Old Debts," "Richard III.," "Apostate," "Richard III." again, "Bertram;" and for his benefit, John Howard Payne's tragedy of "Brutus, or the Fall of Tarquin."

During this engagement, Mr. Booth was visited by one of his occasional intruders, called by some persons eccentricities (?). This unfortunately occurred on his opening night, when he appeared as the gloomy, broken-hearted *Sir Edward Mortimer*. It was a rainy night, and the house not more than half filled. Mr. Booth played his first two scenes in his usual melancholy and pathetic manner, — the very embodiment of the broken-hearted man. But suddenly the demon eccentricity laid hold on him, when he dropped his gloominess and became a *leettle too spirited* for the consistency of the character. The audience perceived this divergency from his usual style of representing the character, and being composed generally of young men, always ready to embrace new ideas, soon entered into the *spirit* with Mr. Booth, and applauded him at the end of every speech. I think I never witnessed such acting before or since that time. When the curtain fell, — as Mr. Booth fell upon the stage, having missed *Wilford's* arms extended to catch him, — there went forth such a burst of applause as made the chandeliers rattle. But the play was not over yet. Mr. Booth, as I suppose, feeling complimented by

this burst of generous applause, jumped up after being dead, stepped quickly forward, and made three very graceful bows to the auditors, and then quietly laid down on the spot from whence he had risen. This brought down another thundering round of applause; when up jumps Mr. B., and stepping forward as before, made three more bows, and then laid down again. Seeing what was likely to continue, I rushed through a private door, gained the stage, and had the drop lowered just as Mr. B. was preparing to go forward for the third time.

In ten minutes after the curtain was finally down, I dispatched a messenger to the office where my play-bills were printed, with directions to strike off a new set of bills announcing Mrs. Mowatt's comedy of "Fashion" for the next night; determining that Mr. Booth should never again appear in a theatre that was under my management. Finding, however, the following day, that the newspapers were treating it good-naturedly, seeming to turn the matter into a joke, and saying that the public were anxious to see Mr. Booth in *Sir Giles Overreach* and *Richard III.*, I concluded to let the engagement proceed; and so, missing one night, Mr. Booth reappeared on Wednesday, June 24th, as *Sir Giles Overreach*, in "New Way to Pay Old Debts," finishing his regular number of nights, and never playing better at any time within my observation.

The St. Louis Theatre was kept open this season through the month of August, during which performances by the regular stock company were given up to the 27th of that month, when Mr. Dan Marble commenced an engagement with "Sam Slick in France" and "Black-eyed Susan." He afterwards performed the "Hue and Cry," "The Backwoodsman," "Times That Tried Us," "All the World's a Stage," "Fortune's Frolic," "Family Ties," "Luke, the Laborer," "Vermonters," "Jonathan in England," "Tom Cringle," and "Larboard Tim."

September 8th, a company of "Sable Harmonists" appeared for three nights, consisting of the following persons: M. T. Boswell, *violinist*; W. Fish, *first banjo*; J. Thomas, *second banjo*; J. Foens, *castinets*; S. Thornton, *triangle*; H. Blake, *congo tambo*; J. C. Cornwell, *director*.

The evening's entertainment commenced with the comedy of "She Stoops to Conquer:" *Young Marlow*, Mr. Ludlow; *Hardcastle*, Mr. Farren; *Tony Lumpkin*, Mr. R. F. Russell; *Miss Hardcastle*, Mrs. Farren; *Mrs. Hardcastle*, Mrs. Russell; *Miss Nevill*, Mrs. R. Russell. This latter lady was the late Miss

Sylvia of the company, who had recently become Mrs. Richard F. Russell.

9th, second night of the "Sable Harmonists," previous to which was performed the comedy of "How to Rule a Husband:" *Mr. Ferment*, Mr. Ludlow; *Gen. Tarragon*, Mr. Farren; *Bob Tyke*, Mr. N. B. Clark; *Mrs. Ferment*, Mrs. Farren.

10th, the third and last night of the Sable Harmonists, with the "Two Galley Slaves," and other entertainments.

11th, there was performed a new national drama, entitled "Palo Alto," founded on some recent incidents of our war with Mexico; previous to which the petit comedy of "The Liar:" *Young Wilding*, Mr. N. M. Ludlow.

12th, "Palo Alto" was repeated, with the comic opera called "Of Age To-Morrow:" *Frederick, Baron Willinghurst*, N. M. Ludlow.

Monday, September 14th, Mr. E. S. Conner commenced an engagement, opening with *Cardinal Richelieu*. The following night was performed "Love's Sacrifice," in which he enacted *Matthew Elmore*; next night he performed *Macbeth*; subsequently, the *Stranger, Charles XII., Richard III., Buridan* in "La Tour de Nesle," "Tortosa the Usurer," *Claude Melnotte*, and *Rolla* in "Pizarro."

September 30th, Miss Julia Turnbull, the danseuse, commenced an engagement of six nights, during which she gave the "Spanish Bolero," "Pas Bohemienne," "La Giulianianna," "La Sylphide," "L'Arragonaise," "La Tarrantule," "El Jaleo de Xeres," "La Cachuchâ," "La Smolenska," also doing the dancing part of *Mlle. Solo*, in the burletta of "Buy it, Dear." On her benefit night, Mr. H. V. Lovell performed for her *Robert Macaire*, and she appeared in a drama entitled the "Spirit of the Fountain."

October 8th, Mr. Richard F. Russell had a benefit, and Mr. J. M. Field appeared and performed for him *Jeremiah Bumps*, in "Turning the Tables," and *Puff*, in the "Critic." Mr. Field performed two nights more, during which he enacted *Rover*, in "Wild Oats;" *Don Cæsar de Bazan*; and for his benefit, *Dazzle* in "London Assurance," *Mantilini* in "Nicholas Nickleby," and the "Artful Dodger."

13th, a benefit was given to the new Orphan Asylum, when was played the tragedy of "George Barnwell," also a drama entitled "The Orphan."

14th, Mr. Murdock commenced another engagement with us, in the character of *Hamlet*, having left an impression on

the minds of the St. Louis public by his previous acting of that character that insured him a full house on his opening night. This was followed with proportionate success on his subsequent nights, during which he performed *Romeo*, *Macbeth*, "Gaiuater," and *Gideon Bodish*, in a tragic play by an American gentleman, a resident of Philadelphia, where the play was first produced; the play was entitled "Witchcraft." It possessed some interest, but was not well adapted to the stage. It was repeated for the benefit of Mr. Murdock on the 21st of October, with the comedy of the "Inconstant" cut down and performed in three acts,—the character of *Young Mirabel* by Mr. Murdock.

On the 22d, a party of gymnasts, calling themselves "Bedouin Arabs," exhibited their feats of acting for three nights, to tolerable business.

October 27th, Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Wallack, Jr., performed for a few nights, commencing with the romantic play of "Pizarro, or The Spaniards in Peru:" *Rolla*, Mr. J. W. Wallack, Jr.; *Elvira*, Mrs. J. Wallack. This was followed by the performance of "Hunchback," "Love's Sacrifice," "King of the Commons," "Bridal," "Werner," "Romeo and Juliet:" Mrs. Wallack performing *Romeo*, and Mr. Wallack *Mercutio*, Mrs. Farren being the *Juliet*. This was repeated November 6th, for the benefit of Mrs. Wallack.

November 7th was the last night of the season, when Mr. Sol. Smith's name was put up for a benefit, and Mr. and Mrs. Wallack performed in "The King of the Commons;" the evening concluding with the comic opera of the "Poor Soldier:" *Darby*, Mr. Sol. Smith, Sr.

This season in St. Louis was a trifle better than the previous one, and gave the management a small profit.

CHAPTER LX.

New Orleans Season of 1846-7 — Mr. and Mrs. J. Wallack — John E. Owens — Mdlle. Blangy — Mr. Murdock — Mr. J. Wallack, Sr. — Ravels — Leopold de Meyer — Joseph Burke — E. L. Davenport — Biography of Mr. and Mrs. Wallack — Mr. and Mrs. Kean — Biography of Mr. Kean — Mm. Augusta — Charles Parsloe — The Ravels — Close of Season in New Orleans — Mobile Season of 1846-7 — Mdlle. Blangy — Her Biography — Sivori, Violinist — Close of Mobile Season.

THE St. Charles Theatre, for the season of 1846-7, commenced on Wednesday, November 18, 1846. The house had been remodelled and redecorated entirely in the interior arrangements; the partitions separating the boxes had been removed, and instead of benches, large and commodious cushioned chairs had been introduced in the dress-circle and parquet, and the second-tier or family-circle; and every thing looked clean, bright, and beautiful.

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Wallack, Jr., were announced as the opening "stars," but they were really engaged for the season, to perform in the St. Charles and Mobile theatres, as the managers might require their services.

The opening pieces of the St. Charles Theatre this season were "The King of the Commons," in which Mr. and Mrs. Wallack appeared, — he as *James V. of Scotland*, and she as *Madeline Wier*. After the play, Miss Fanny Deering appeared in a medley dance; the evening concluding with a condensed rendition of "A Bold Stroke for a Husband." On the second night of the season was performed the "Hunchback:" *Master Walter*, Mr. Wallack; *Sir Thomas Clifford*, Mr. Henkins, his first appearance in New Orleans; *Master Modus*, Mr. C. F. Adams; *Julia*, Mrs. Wallack; *Helen*, Mrs. Farren.

November 21st, "Macbeth" was performed: *Macbeth*, Mr. Wallack; *Lady Macbeth*, Mrs. Wallack; the evening concluding with the farce of the "Wind-mill:" *Sampson Low*, Mr. Owens. This is the same gentleman that is well known in the present day as John E. Owens, the popular comedian and wealthy actor. This was the first appearance in New Orleans of Mr. Owens, who afterwards became an immense favorite in that city, and at one time manager of the Varieties Theatre there. The following night, "Romeo and Juliet:"

Romeo, Mrs. Wallack ; *Mercutio*, Mr. Wallack ; *Juliet*, Mrs. Farren. Next night, "Love's Sacrifice." The following night, the "Lady of Lyons;" concluding the evening with the comedy of the "Belle's Stratagem,"—Mr. and Mrs. Wallack in both plays, in the latter performing *Doricourt* and *Letitia Hardy*.

November 25th, Bulwer's comedy of "Money:" *Alfred Evelyn*, Mr. Wallack ; *Sir John Vesey*, Mr. Farren ; *Graves*, Mr. Owens ; *Clara Douglas*, Mrs. Wallack ; *Lady Franklin*, Mrs. Farren. November 26th, Mrs. Wallack's benefit, when was repeated the "Lady of Lyons;" concluding the evening with a repeat of the "Belle's Stratagem." This was followed by the performance of the "Bridal," "Richard III.," "William Tell," "Merchant of Venice," and "Honeymoon," the two latter being for the benefit of Mr. Wallack, December 1st. Two or three days after, Mr. and Mrs. Wallack left for Mobile, to perform in the theatre of Ludlow & Smith in that city.

December 3d, the following announcement appeared on the bills: "Mr. N. M. Ludlow having arrived in the city, will perform for a limited number of nights, commencing with *Dr. Pangloss*, in the comedy of the 'Heir at Law.'" Then followed *Ferment*, in "School of Reform;" *Scamper*, in "Promissory Note;" *Young Wilding*, in "The Liar;" *Nipperkin*, in "Sprigs of Laurel;" *Frederick*, *Baron Willinghurst*, in the comic opera called "Of Age To-morrow;" *Kit Cosey*, in "Town and Country;" and *Young Marlow*, in Goldsmith's comedy of "She Stoops to Conquer;" *Tony Lumpkin*, Mr. Owens ; *Hardcastle*, Mr. Farren ; *Miss Hardcastle*, Mrs. Farren.

About this time Miss Julia Turnbull, the danseuse, commenced an engagement; also Mr. Lovell. She performed her usual dances, and he appeared in his comedy characters, pretty nearly the same as during their nights of the past season at St. Louis.

Miss Mary Ann Lee, a popular danseuse, was also engaged about this time, with her assistant dancer, Mr. G. W. Smith. Mr. and Mrs. Wallack having returned from Mobile, opened again on Monday, December 14th, in "Macbeth." Then followed Bulwer's comedy of "Money," dancing by Miss Lee, and the farce of "Crimson Crimes:" *Mr. Fright*, Mr. Owens ; *Mrs. Fright*, Mrs. Farren. Next night, "Romeo and Juliet," cast as during their former engagement; dancing by Miss Lee, and concluding with the farce of "A Kiss in the Dark:" *Pettibone*, Mr. Owens. December 17th, benefit of

Miss Lee. On this occasion Miss Lee appeared as an actress, in the vaudeville of "Loan of a Lover," as *Gertrude*. This was a clever attempt of Miss Lee in acting, though it appeared insipid to those who had seen Mrs. Keely and Mrs. Skerrett in the same character. Miss Lee performed some very clever dancing separately, and conjointly with Mr. G. W. Smith, her assistant. The entertainment of the evening concluded with the drama of "Rent Day," Mr. and Mrs. Wallack appearing in it as *Martin* and *Rachel Heywood*.

December 18th, Mr. Dan Marble commenced an engagement in "Sam Patch in France," and *William*, in "Black-eyed Susan." Mr. Marble performed ten nights, going through his usual round of characters, to good houses. Mdle. Blangy, the most perfect artist as a pantomimist danseuse that ever appeared in New Orleans, commenced an engagement on December 28th with the beautiful grand ballet called "La Giselle," in which she was assisted by a troupe of dancers that travelled with her. I never witnessed finer acting than was displayed by this artist in her performance of the *Giselle*. She played ten nights, to crowded houses and enthusiastic applause.

January 7, 1847. Mr. Murdock commenced an engagement in *Hamlet*. Next night (8th), he performed *Claude Melnotte*, in the "Lady of Lyons," and *Frederick*, in the "Prince and Watchman." The entertainment of the evening concluded with a grand display of fire-works in honor of the day, the anniversary of the battle of New Orleans. Mr. Murdock performed eight nights, going through his usual characters. On his last night, and benefit, he performed *Othello* to the *Iago* of Mr. J. Wallack, Jr.; *Desdemona*, Mrs. Wallack; *Emilia*, Mrs. Farren.

January 15th, Mr. James Wallack, Sr., commenced an engagement, appearing in *Benedick*; *Beatrice*, Mrs. Farren. This was followed with "Hamlet;" then "The Wife;" *St. Pierre*, Mr. J. Wallack, Sr.; *Leonardo Gonzaga*, J. W. Wallack, Jr.; *Marianna*, Mrs. J. Wallack; the evening concluding with the drama, "Therese, the Orphan of Geneva;" *Carwin*, Mr. J. Wallack, Jr.; *Therese*, Mrs. Farren. January 18th, was performed Knowles's play of the "Hunchback," with the following powerful cast of characters: *Master Walter*, Mr. Wallack, Sr.; *Sir Thomas Clifford*, Wallack, Jr.; *Master Modus*, J. M. Weston; *Lord Tinsel*, McCutcheon; *Fathom*, Owens; *Julia*, Mrs. Wallack; *Helen*, Mrs. Farren. The evening concluded with the farce of "Crimson Crimes," with Mr. Owens, Mr. Farren, and Mrs. Farren in the principal charac-

ters. Next night, "Othello," with Wallack, Sr., as *Iago*, and Wallack, Jr., as *Othello*; *Desdemona*, Mrs. Wallack; *Emilia*, Mrs. Farren. Next night, a repeat of "The Wife," as before; concluding with "Wonder:" *Don Felix*, Wallack, Sr.

January 21st, Mrs. Wallack's name was put up for a benefit, when was performed the "Rent Day," with Mr. Wallack, Sr., as *Martin Heywood*, and a fine piece of acting it was; *Rachel Heywood*, Mrs. Wallack. Mr. Marble being in the city, appeared in "Sam Patch in France;" after which the petit comedy of "Matrimony:" *Delavel*, Mr. Wallack, Jr.; *Clara*, Mrs. Wallack. Next night, the "Merchant of Venice:" *Shylock*, Mr. Wallack; *Portia*, Mrs. Wallack; the evening concluding with "William Tell:" *Tell*, Mr. Wallack, Jr.; *Emma*, Mrs. Wallack. The following night was performed "Pizarro," *Rolla*, Mr. Wallack, Sr.; the evening concluding with the "Yankee Peddler," followed by "Black-eyed Susan," in both of which Mr. Dan Marble appeared. This proved to be an attractive bill. Notwithstanding the powerful cast of the pieces of the previous nights, not one bill drew as good a house as the last one. The public did not seem to appreciate the acting of Mr. Wallack, Sr., in his Shakesperian representations; but whenever he performed *Rolla*, *Don Cæsar de Bazan*, *Massaroni*, or any of his fine comedy characters, they came to see him act.

January 24th was a night set apart for the benefit of Mr. Owens, when was acted "Katharine and Petruchio," with Mr. Wallack, Sr., as *Petruchio*, Mr. Owens as *Grumio*, and Mrs. Farren as *Katharine*. There were other entertainments, and the whole concluded with the farce of "Crimson Crimes."

Monday, January 25th, the Ravel Family commenced an engagement that proved the most attractive of the season. They commenced with the tight-rope exercises, then gave the "Venetian Carnival," and a variety of other entertainments. This company of gymnasts performed only on alternate nights; the others were occupied by the Wallacks, Murdock, and Dan Marble; but these latter nights were but poorly attended.

The Ravels performed eight nights during this engagement, giving the public a series of highly entertaining pieces, such as "Blase and Babet," "Tight-Rope," "Godenska, or the Skaters of Wilna," "Vol au Vent," "Jocko," "Invisible Harlequin," "La Sylphide," "Bedouin Arab Feats," "Glimpses of the Vatican at Rome," "The Milliners," "Robert Macaire in Pantomimes;" and on their last night, for the benefit of Gabriel Ravel, the "Three-faced Frenchman," in which Gabriel Ravel performed three characters, during

which he spoke in three different languages; the evening concluding with the pantomime of "Mons. Duchalumeau." On this night the St. Charles Theatre was filled to its utmost capacity, and many were refused admittance at an early hour.

February 4th, Mr. James Wallack, Sr., took a benefit, the entertainments commencing with the noted comedy of "Matrimony," in which Mr. and Mrs. Wallack appeared; this was followed by "Don Cæsar de Bazan," with Mr. Wallack, Sr., in the title rôle; concluding with the "Adopted Child," with Mr. Wallack, Sr., as *Michael the Ferryman*, a character most admirably acted by him. This was the last night that Mr. James Wallack, Sr., acted in the city of New Orleans.

Leopold De Meyer, the pianist, sometimes styled the "Lion Pianist,"—in consequence, I suppose of the *pawing* and unmerciful *poundings* that he sometimes gave his piano,—arrived in New Orleans about this time, and with him came Joseph Burke, the "Irish violinist." They were travelling together on a concert tour. Their arrival was not expected by us, and we had but one night that we could offer them. On this one night they performed, which was Saturday, February 6th, and on that night they gave a "grand concert" which delighted a very numerous audience.

Monday, February 8th, Mrs. Mowatt commenced an engagement, supported by Mr. E. L. Davenport, who travelled with her for that purpose; her opening play was Milman's "Fazio, or the Italian Wife:" *Fazio*, Mr. Davenport; *Bianca*, the wife, Mrs. Mowatt; the evening concluding with the nautical drama of "Black-eyed Susan," Mr. Davenport performing *William*, the sailor, and Mrs. Farren *Susan*. Mrs. Mowatt performed during this engagement six nights only, going through her usual round of characters to very fashionable and well-filled houses.

About this time Mr. and Mrs. Wallack, Jr., presented their names jointly for a farewell benefit, which occurred on Sunday evening, March 7th, both appearing in "Love's Sacrifice" and "The Honeymoon." They had been engaged for the entire season, but in consequence of some misunderstanding of the conditions of the terms of their engagement, the management thought it desirable to compromise with them and cancel their engagement. The terms demanded by Mr. Wallack, although exorbitant and unreasonable, were acceded to.

As these performers were both well known and popular in the South and West in after years, it may not be amiss to add a short biography of them just here.

James W. Wallack, Jr., was the son of Henry Wallack, and

cousin of Mr. John Lester Wallack, the present manager (1875) of Wallack's Theatre, New York. He was born in London, England, about the year 1818; came to America with his father when about a year old, made his first appearance on the stage as *Cora's* child, in "Pizarro," at the Philadelphia Theatre, in 1822. In 1836 he was a member of the company of Messrs. Flynn & Willard, at that time managers of the old National Theatre, formerly the Italian Opera-house, New York. In 1838 he was a leading actor in his uncle's theatre; New York. In 1842 he married Mrs. W. Sefton, formerly Miss Waring; visited London in 1851, and played an engagement at the Haymarket Theatre; afterwards manager of the Marylebone Theatre, London; afterwards took a company of English performers to Paris, France. Was engaged by Ludlow & Smith as a leading stock actor for their theatres at New Orleans and Mobile, the season of 1846-7; but their engagement was terminated before the season concluded, at the request of Ludlow & Smith, who found Mr. Wallack and wife of very little use to them in consequence of the gentleman's unaccommodating disposition and unwillingness to perform in any play unless it was one that suited him, and where the character would be such as tragedy "stars" would usually perform. Mr. Wallack demanded and was paid the salary of himself and wife for a number of weeks of their unfinished term of engagement; took their benefits and their departure immediately following, and never performed under that management again. Subsequently, I believe, Mr. and Mrs. Wallack went to California, Australia, and other points. Mr. Wallack died, May, 1873, in New York, and was buried from the "Little Church around the Corner."

Mrs. Wallack (Ann Waring) was born in New York, in 1815. Her father was Mr. Leigh Waring, an English actor of more than ordinary talent in light comedy and juvenile tragedy, who first appeared in America in 1812. Her mother was Caroline Placide, one of the members of the celebrated family of histrionics bearing that name. About the time Ann Waring was born, her father died,—the latter part of 1815. In 1826, her mother married Mr. Rufus Blake. In 1828, Miss Waring made her first appearance on the stage, at the Chatham Theatre, September 27th, then under the management of Thomas A. Cooper and N. M. Ludlow. The character selected by her for a *début* was *Amanthis*, in the "Child of Nature." Being young (only thirteen) and handsome, she made a very favorable impression. Mr. Ireland, in his "Records of the New York Stage," in speaking of this lady, says: "An unlucky

engagement in early life (leading the female department at the Bowery Theatre before she was eighteen) confirmed her in a style of acting that she has never since entirely shaken off, and that, notwithstanding her transcendent ability, has marred some of her most admirable performances." In March, 1837, she married William Sefton, and not long after they went to New Orleans, where Mr. Sefton died, I believe, in 1839. She married again in 1842, James W. Wallack; performed in New York in 1845; was engaged, conjointly with her husband, by Ludlow & Smith as leading performers in their theatres at New Orleans and Mobile during the season of 1846-7. She visited London with her husband in 1851; also Australia, and returned with him to America in 1856. She was engaged at the Winter Garden Theatre in 1864-5, during the lengthy run of Edwin Booth's *Hamlet*, in which she played the *Queen* with great satisfaction to the public. This lady died a few years after her husband.

March 8th, Mr. Collins, the Irish vocalist and comedian, commenced an engagement of six nights, during which he performed his usual Irish characters and sang his Irish songs; the most popular among the latter was his "Widow McCree," and "Bold Soldier Boy." Mr. Collins was re-engaged, and played six more nights. Mr. James R. Anderson being in the city, and detained for a week, performed two nights, — Sunday, 14th of March, and Sunday, 21st of March, — enacting, on the first, Schiller's "Robbers," and on the second night, the "Lady of Lyons."

Mr. and Mrs. Kean commenced an engagement on the 22d of March, with the comedy of "The Jealous Wife:" *Mr. and Mrs. Oakly*, Mr. and Mrs. Kean. The next night they performed, for the first time in New Orleans, a play entitled, "The Wife's Secret:" *Sir Walter Arnot*, Mr. Kean; *Lady Eveline Arnot*, Mrs. Kean. This play was acted four nights during the engagement, and, I believe, was considered interesting. Mr. Kean performed *Don Felix*, in the comedy of "Wonder," for the benefit of Mrs. Farren, on Saturday, April 3d. As I may not have occasion to speak again of Mr. Charles Kean, I here subjoin a short biography of him:—

Charles John Kean was born at Waterford, Ireland, January 18, 1811. Although cradled in poverty, the upward turn in the fortunes of the father gave the youth every opportunity of education that the best preparatory schools at Eaton could bestow. When nearly seventeen, he was offered a cadetship in the East India Company's service, a situation which his father, whose prosperity was already on the backward track,

urged him to accept, but which he declined. About this time Stephen Price, who was manager at that period of Drury Lane Theatre, offered him an opportunity to appear on the stage, at a salary of ten pounds per week. He accepted, and made his *début* there as *Young Norval*, in "Douglas," October 1, 1827. His third character was *Frederick*, in "Lovers' Vows," on which occasion the *Amelia Wildenheim* of the night was Miss Ellen Tree, the lady that fifteen years after became his wife. He afterwards performed in Glasgow, where, in October, 1828, his father — who had become reconciled to his determination — played for his benefit the character of *Lucius Junius Brutus* (John Howard Payne's "Brutus") to his son's *Titus*. In January, 1829, he appeared again at Drury Lane Theatre, as *Romeo*; and after the close of the season he acted in the provinces, and at the Haymarket, London, where he made his first decided success as *Sir Edward Mortimer*. After practising industriously in Great Britain and on the Continent, he determined on visiting America, where his first season's success was of the most gratifying kind. He opened in New York at the Park Theatre, on the 1st of September, 1830, in *Richard III*. He visited New Orleans about the beginning of 1831; performed there an engagement, in which he was partially successful; played afterwards at Natchez, under my stage-management for Caldwell. He returned to England in 1833, but was disappointed in his reception, — unlike what he had met with in America. After some time he appeared again at Drury Lane, as *Hamlet*, in January, 1838, where he was received with marked approbation. In 1839, he made another visit to America, being engaged by Mr. James W. Wallack, at the National Theatre, New York; but unluckily that theatre was burned down before Mr. Kean had finished his engagement. He afterwards played at Niblo's Garden and at the Park; but his efforts were marred by an attack of bronchitis, which nearly deprived him of his voice, and from which he never fully recovered. On the 29th of January, 1842, he was married, in Dublin, to Miss Ellen Tree; and again, in 1845, visited New York, and came South with his wife in the beginning of 1846; performed at the St. Charles Theatre, New Orleans, and at Mobile and St. Louis, Missouri, and returned to Europe in the spring of 1847. Ireland says: "It is perhaps due to the lady, viz., Mrs. Kean — to say that the great success of the latter visit was principally attributed to her. Mr. Kean at one time was a co-manager with Mr. Keely in the Princess Theatre, London. Mr. Kean and wife were in this country again in 1865, on which occasion he produced, for the first

time in America, a play entitled "*Louis XI.*," which was considered a good play, and his performance of *Louis* the best of his efforts. Mr. Kean died in London, England, January 24, 1868, aged fifty-seven years. He was a man charitable by nature, and liberal with his purse; honorable in his dealings, and kind to his inferiors; a good son, a loving husband and a kind father, and withal a Christian gentleman, in the broad and general sense of the term.

April 5th, Mr. Leonard, a representative of Irish characters, made his first appearance in New Orleans, in a new Irish drama entitled "*The White Horse of the Peppers:*" *Gerald Pepper*, Mr. Leonard; the evening concluding with the "*Irish Tutor;*" *Terry O'Rourke*, Mr. Leonard. This gentleman performed four nights only, during which he acted, in addition to the above, "*His Last Legs,*" "*Happy Man,*" "*Irish Lion,*" "*King O'Neil,*" "*Rory O'More,*" and the "*Irish Attorney.*"

April 14th, Mme. Augusta, otherwise the Countess Fitz-James, commenced an engagement, which was unavoidably limited to five nights. She had with her, as assistants, Mr. Fredericks (principal male dancer), Miss Adele Leman, Miss Caroline Leman, and Mr. Charles Parsloe (comic dancer). They commenced with the ballet pantomime of "*Natalie,*" concluding the evening with the grand Spanish dance by Mme. Augusta, of "*La Castellana.*" This was repeated the next night, and the evening concluded with "*La Polka Comique,*" by Mme. Augusta and Mons. Fredericks. On her third night she gave the grand ballet pantomime of "*La Sonnambula,*" finishing the evening with "*La Tarrantule,*" a grand and exciting dance, by Mme. Augusta and Mons. Fredericks. "*La Sonnambula*" was repeated the fourth and fifth nights, the latter being for the benefit of Madame Augusta, when was also performed a new ballet pantomime, entitled the "*Devil in Love,*" in which the whole troupe were employed. This lady's engagement was successful. She was very much admired for her dancing and her lady-like bearing on the stage. There was a finish and elegant delicacy in her style seldom seen on the boards of a theatre. Madame Augusta Fitz-James was truly a lady of elegant manners and courtly address in all the walks of life.

The Ravel Family, after performing in Mobile, returned to New Orleans, and began an engagement on the 4th of April, Mr. Leonard, the Irish comedian, playing on their off-nights. During the few nights of Mme. Augusta the Ravels did not perform, using the intermediate time for the preparation of

their comic pantomime of "The Conjuror's Gift, or the Magic Pills." This pantomime was very laughable and entertaining, and was performed for ten nights in succession, which terminated the New Orleans season, April 30, 1847. During the off-nights of the Ravels, benefits were given certain members of the stock company. On one of these occasions N. M. Ludlow performed *Felix*, in the operatic farce of the "Hunter of the Alps."

The Mobile season of 1846-7 commenced on the 28th of November, with the comedy called "A Bold Stroke for a Husband:" *Don Julio*, Mr. J. M. Weston; *Donna Olivia*, Mrs. Charles Fisher; the evening concluding with the farce of "Ladies' Man:" *Daffodil Twod*, Mr. Weston. The following night the drama of "Ambrose Gwinette:" the title rôle by Mr. Weston; *Lucy Freelove*, Mrs. Mary Stuart; the evening concluding with the petit comedy of "The Emperor's Command." *Col. Ferrier*, Mr. Weston; *Clarisse*, Mrs. C. Fisher. On the next night was produced, for the first time in Mobile, a play of thrilling interest, dramatized from the novel of Victor Hugo, entitled "Lucretia Borgia:" *Gennaro*, Mr. Weston; *Lucretia Borgia*, Mrs. Stuart; the evening finishing with the farce of "A Man Without a Head:" *Mr. Oblivious Top*, Mr. Weston. The play was repeated the next night, with the farce of "My Neighbor's Wife:" *Mrs. Somerton*, Mrs. Charles Fisher. On the following night, the drama of "Don Cæsar De Bazan:" *Don Cæsar*, Mr. Weston; *Maritana*, Mrs. Stuart.

Friday evening, December 4th, Mr. and Mrs. J. Wallack, Jr., commenced an engagement, opening in the "Lady of Lyons." They then performed "Love's Sacrifice," "King of the Commons," "Romeo and Juliet," "Bridal," "Merchant of Venice," and "Honeymoon" for the benefit of Mrs. Wallack. Next night, "Richard III.," for the benefit of Mr. Wallack.

December 14th, Miss Julia Turnbull, the danseuse, began; also Mr. Lovell. The gentleman opened in *Robert Macaire*, in the drama of that name, during which "La Pas Styriene" was danced by Miss Julia Turnbull and Mr. Lovell. This was followed by the drama of "Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady:" *Ruy Gomez*, Mr. Lovell; the evening concluding with the beautiful "Pas La Venitianna," by Miss Turnbull. These two artists performed five nights only, the fifth being for the benefit of Mr. Lovell. This gentleman performed during those nights the following additional characters: *Chevalier Steinberg*, in the "Youthful Queen;" *Captain Bamboozle*,

in the farce called "Bamboozling;" *Vivian*, in the "Dumb Belle;" and *Captain Popham*, in the "Eaton Boy."

December 21st, Miss Mary Ann Lee, the danseuse, began. She appeared for six nights, dancing between the play and farce the popular dances of the day.

Mr. and Mrs. Wallack began again on the 23d of December, performing their usual round of characters, to receipts that in general did not meet the expenses of the night.

Mr. Dan Marble commenced on the 29th of December, and performed nine nights to very fair houses, concluding January 7, 1847.

January 11, 1847, Mdlle. Blangy commenced an engagement of six nights only, assisted by Mons. Bouxary and Mdlle. H. Vallée, commencing with the fairy ballet of "La Giselle." This beautiful ballet was performed every night during her engagement; to which was added, on her last night, the ballet of "La Chatte." This artist gave unqualified satisfaction in all of her performances, and was unquestionably a fine pantomimist as well as dancer. She never appeared in the South after this visit. Mdlle. Blangy made her first appearance in America at Niblo's Garden, July 7, 1846, in the ballet pantomime called "Vengeance of Diana," as *Calista*, making a very favorable impression; she performed again with increased success. After performing in New Orleans and other cities she returned to Europe. She came to America again in 1849, and performed at the Broadway Theatre. She shortly after left for France, and did not visit the United States again.

January 18th, Mr. Murdock began an engagement in *Hamlet*. He performed six nights, enacting *Claude Melnotte*; *Beverly*, in "The Gamester;" *Evelyn*, in Bulwer's comedy of "Money;" *Rover*, in O'Keefe's comedy of "Wild Oats;" and for his benefit repeating "The Gamester," and concluding with *Young Mirabel*, in "Inconstant."

January 26th, Mrs. Mowatt commenced an engagement, Mr. E. L. Davenport supporting her in the leading male characters. This lady began with "Much Ado About Nothing," herself enacting *Beatrice*, and Mr. Davenport *Benedick*. The next night she appeared as *Lucy Ashton*, Mr. D. as *Edgar Ravenswood*; the same evening she performed *Mauclon*, in the "Trumpeter's Daughter." The following night she appeared as *Julia*, in the "Hunchback." She performed during this engagement also, *Bianca* in "Fazio, or the Italian Wife;" the *Countess* in "Love, or the Countess and the Serf;" *Gertrude*, in her own comedy of "Fashion;" *Evadne*, in Shiel's tragedy of that name; and for her benefit, *Ion*, in Talford's tragedy of that name.

February 6th, Mr. Davenport had a benefit, when was performed "The Stranger:" the *Stranger* and *Mrs. Haller* by Mr. D. and Mrs. Mowatt; the same evening concluding with the comedy of "The Honeymoon:" *Duke* and *Juliana*, Mr. D. and Mrs. Mowatt, and the last appearance of these two artists.

Monday, February 8th, Mr. J. W. Wallack, Sr., commenced with *Hamlet*. He then performed, the following nights, *Iago* to the *Othello* of his nephew, Mr. J. W. Wallack, Jr.; *Desdemona*, Mrs. Wallack; *Emilia*, Mrs. Stuart. February 11th, Mr. Wallack, Sr., enacted *Don Cesar de Bazan*, which was repeated on the 16th. February 18th, Mr. Wallack brought out a new drama, entitled, "Ernestine, or Which is the Heiress," in which he performed the character called *Frederick*, *Ernestine* being acted by Mrs. Stuart. This drama was performed again on the 22d, on which occasion Signor Camillo Sivori, a celebrated violinist, appeared for one night, and gave a concert at the conclusion of the drama.

Mrs. Mowatt, having completed her engagement at New Orleans, began at Mobile on Tuesday, February 23d, with Knowles's play of "The Wife," Mr. Wallack, Sr., enacting *Julian St. Pierre*, and Mr. Davenport *Leonardo de Gonzaga*; *Marianna*, Mrs. Mowatt. The following night the "Merchant of Venice" was performed, with Mr. Wallack as *Shylock*; *Portia*, Mrs. Mowatt; *Gratiano*, Mr. Ludlow. Next night, the "Hunchback," with Mr. Wallack as *Master Walter*; *Sir Thomas Clifford*, Mr. Davenport; *Julia*, Mrs. Mowatt; *Helen*, Mrs. Charles Fisher.

Friday, 26th, "Much Ado About Nothing:" *Benedick*, Mr. Wallack; *Beatrice*, Mrs. Mowatt; *Hero*, Mrs. Charles Fisher. On the 27th, "Pizarro" was performed: *Rolla*, Mr. Wallack; *Pizarro*, Mr. Davenport; *Elvira*, Mrs. Mowatt. Monday, March 1st, the farewell benefit of Mrs. Mowatt, in which she appeared as *Ion*; concluding the evening with the comedy of "The Wonder:" *Don Felix*, Mr. Wallack; *Donna Violante*, Mrs. J. W. Wallack, Jr. March 2d, Mr. J. W. Wallack, Sr., having concluded his engagement, took a farewell benefit, and never again performed in Mobile. The character he appeared in was *Iago*, to the *Othello* of Mr. Wallack, Jr., Mrs. Mowatt performing *Desdemona* and Mrs. Wallack *Emilia*. The citizens of Mobile paid a just tribute to this excellent actor by giving him a full house at his farewell benefit.

Mr. James R. Anderson began an engagement March 4th, with *Hamlet*; next night, *Claude Melnotte*; the following

night, *James V.*, "King of the Commons," and for his first benefit, *Charles de Moor*, in "The Robbers." The next night, March 9th, he enacted "*Richard III.*;" repeated "The Robbers" the next night; the following night, "Money;" then the "Elder Brother," for his farewell.

March 15th, the Ravel Family commenced an engagement of six nights only, concluding March 23d with the farewell benefit of Gabriel Ravel, to a house crowded to its full capacity.

Mr. Collins, the Irish comedian and vocalist, then began, March 24th, with "The Nervous Man" and the farce of "Teddy the Tiler," performing twelve nights in all, and going through his usual *rôle* of Irish characters, to tolerably good business.

After Mr. Collins, a few benefits were given to certain performers, viz.: Mr. Richard F. Russell, Miss Emily Coad, Mrs. Charles Fisher, La Petite Cornelia Jefferson, and Mr. Wharham. Mr. Collins devoted his portion of the receipts of one night, when a benefit was given to the Irish Relief Fund. The season closed on the 9th of April, 1847, with a benefit to the manager, N. M. Ludlow.

These seasons at New Orleans and Mobile, like those in the same cities in 1845-6, proved highly profitable to the management.

The following gentlemen and ladies constituted the stock companies of Ludlow & Smith for the winter season of New Orleans and Mobile, 1846-7, performing in either city, as the business of the theatres might need their services:—

N. M. Ludlow and Sol. Smith, managers and actors; Mr. John M. Weston, stage-manager and actor; George P. Farren, E. Owens, W. H. Chippendale, J. W. Wallack, Jr., E. Henkins, S. V. Lovell, R. F. Russell, N. B. Clarke, C. F. Adams, J. S. Wright, McDonald, Bailey, H. Schoolcraft, J. Merryfield, C. Webb, McCutcheon, Prior, A. J. Marks, H. Tuthill, Grierson, Wilmarth, J. Hickmott, Uhl, Deering, Ryner, Pottle, Nunez, Roys, Davis, Thorpe, Johnson, Fredericks, Parr, Carter, Caulfield, Proctor, Gourelay, Elms, Jones, Hickey, Knight, Williams, Andrews, Krieder, McMillan, Duff, Marston, Harper, Fletcher, Johns, Mrs. J. W. Wallack, Mrs. Russell, Mrs. R. Russell, Mrs. C. F. Adams, Mrs. Farren, Miss Meadows, Mrs. Merryfield, Mrs. Mary Stuart, Mrs. Charles Fisher, Miss E. Coad, Miss Julia Turnbull, Miss Mary Ann Lee, Miss Caulfield, Miss Hubbard, Miss Deering, Miss Fanny Deering, Mrs. Caulfield, Miss Stannard, Mrs. Pottle, Mrs. Carter, Miss Babbitt, Mrs. Fletcher, Miss Cornelia Jefferson.

CHAPTER LXI.

St. Louis Season of 1847 — John Collins — Mme. Augusta — Sketch of her Career — Mrs. Mowatt — Her Biography — Miss Mary Taylor — Her Biography — Sketch of W. H. Chippendale — Miss Julia Dean — Biography of N. B. Clarke — Mme. Ciocca — La Petite Bertha — Mrs. Louisa Hunt — Viennese Children — American Theatre, New Orleans — R. L. Place.

THE summer season of 1847 commenced April 19th, with the following organization:—

Ludlow & Smith, managers and actors; James P. Bailey, treasurer; D. P. Ellsworth, principal machinist; J. M. Weston, N. B. Clarke, George P. Farren, Richard F. Russell, J. S. Wright, Ryner, McMillan, Grierson, Hickmott, Uhl, Fredericks, Fletcher, Johns, Proctor, Deering, Richards, Williams, Carter, Mrs. Farren, Mrs. Russell, Mrs. R. Russell, Mrs. Deering, Mrs. Fletcher, Mrs. McMillan, Miss Coad, Miss E. Deering, Miss N. Deering, Miss Fanny Deering.

Mr. John Collins, the Irish comedian and vocalist, was the first "star." He began with "The Irish Ambassador" and the farce of "Born to Good Luck." He performed twelve nights, including his benefits, and to remunerative business.

The next "star" was the elegant, chaste, and lady-like danseuse, Mme. Augusta. She commenced on Monday, May 3d, in the ballet pantomime of "La Giselle," assisted, as before, by Mons. Fredericks, Mr. Charles Parsloe, and others. This lady's engagement extended to ten nights, and each night the theatre was well filled, although some of the nights were very unfavorable, being unusually wet and cold for the time of year. Madame Augusta, *alias* Countess of St. James, made her first appearance in America at the Park Theatre, New York, September 16, 1836, in a scene from a ballet called "Les Naiades." She was well received, and soon became a great favorite in most of the theatres of America. She had a very intelligent and expressive face, beautiful and modest, eyes dark and brilliant; she was as graceful as a fawn in all her movements. She was the wife of a French gentleman who called himself the Count St. James, and who said he was descended from the royal family of Stuart. Mme. Augusta after years of popularity and success, played her last engage-

ment at Burton's Theatre, Chambers Street, New York, in 1851; and shortly after the death of her husband, who died early in the year 1855, took a complimentary benefit and made her last appearance. Her husband was more than double her age; and the last heard of her she was teaching dancing in New York City.

On the 17th of May, Camillo Sivori, the great Italian violin performer, gave a concert. He performed two nights, but he did not draw as was expected.

On the 19th, N. M. Ludlow was announced for the first time this season, in Foote's petit comedy of "The Liar," as *Young Wilding*. The next night he performed *Vapid*, in "The Dramatist;" the following night, *Marplot*, in "The Busybody," with other popular comedies for a few succeeding nights.

May 31st, Mr. Dan Marble commenced an engagement, and performed four nights only, being then obliged to stop for Mr. James R. Anderson, whose engagement commenced, by contract, on the 4th of June, in the character of *Hamlet*. He performed eight nights, enacting *Othello*, *Claude Melnotte*, *Charles de Moor*, *Macbeth*, *James V.* in the "King of the Commons," and *Charles* in the "Elder Brother." Mr. Anderson's engagement was a profitable one.

June 14th, Mrs. Mowatt commenced an engagement as *Pauline*, in the "Lady of Lyons," Mr. E. L. Davenport being the *Claude Melnotte*. Mrs. Mowatt performed twelve nights during this engagement, appearing in the following characters: *Juliet*; *Julia*, in the "Hunchback;" *Beatrice*, in "Much Ado About Nothing;" *Marianna*, in "The Wife;" *Constance*, in "Love Chase;" *Mrs. Haller*, in "The Stranger;" *Ion*; *Rosalind*, in "As You Like It;" *Countess*, in Knowles's play of "Love;" for her benefit, next night, *Gertrude*, in her own play of "Fashion;" and on her last night, for Mr. Davenport's benefit, *Lucy Ashton*, in "The Bride of Lammermoor," and *Juliana*, in Tobin's comedy of "The Honeymoon."

This was the last engagement of this lady with us prior to her departure for Europe.

As she held an enviable position in public and private life, as actress, authoress, and wife, I subjoin a short sketch of her life, presuming it will be acceptable to the readers of this book:—

Mrs. Anna Cora Mowatt was born at Bordeaux, France, during a temporary residence there of her parents, in 1821. She was the daughter of Samuel G. Ogden, of New York, and great-granddaughter of Francis Lewis, one of the signers of

the Declaration of the Independence of the United States. She was married in 1836, when she was only fifteen years of age, to James Mowatt, a gentleman of supposed wealth; but he proving shortly after to be bankrupt, she had recourse to the stage, as most congenial to her taste, to supply the necessary means of comfort and respectability.

She had at times, prior to her marriage, indulged her taste for the histrionic art, in private theatricals; and now the force of circumstances, as well as natural inclination, prompted her to adopt it as a profession. She made her *début* at the Park Theatre, New York, June 13, 1845, in *Pauline* ("Lady of Lyons"), to a crowded house, brilliant with the beauty and fashion of the city; the occasion being a benefit to Mr. William H. Crisp, from the Dublin Theatre, who had recently made his first appearance in America.

About three months prior to her appearance on the stage, a comedy written by her, and entitled "Fashion," was produced at the Park Theatre, with a powerful cast of the characters, and which had an unprecedented run of twenty nights, remaining a popular play for several years.

Mrs. Mowatt performed two engagements at Niblo's Garden Theatre, with Mr. Crisp as her leading man, — one commencing July 14, 1845, the other on the 25th of the same month, both of which engagements were successful. She started out on a tour of the principal Eastern theatres, playing successfully wherever she went. In 1846 she came West, and performed with Ludlow & Smith at Mobile, New Orleans, and St. Louis. During these engagements she had Mr. E. L. Davenport to travel with her as a leading man, he supporting her in her various plays. In 1848 she went to England, where in 1850 her husband died after a long and painful illness.

In 1851, Mrs. Mowatt returned to America, and commenced a series of professional engagements, that were highly successful, in all the principal theatres of the East, South, and West, performing with Ludlow & Smith at New Orleans, Mobile, and St. Louis. There was a grand ovation given her in New York, June 3, 1854, in the way of a complimentary benefit, at Niblo's Theatre, attended by all the *élite* of the city, on which occasion she made her last appearance, in the character of *Pauline* ("Lady of Lyons"). On the 7th of the same month she was married to W. F. Ritchie, of Richmond, Virginia, when she withdrew from the stage to enter on the duties of private life. In the enjoyment of a home of splendid comforts, and surrounded by the most refined society, she lived happily for many years, and died with the regrets of a multi-

tude of loving friends, that her great mental qualities, amiable disposition, and refined manners had drawn around her.

Her death occurred in Europe, while abroad for her health, in August, 1870.

June 29th, Miss Mary Taylor and Mr. W. H. Chippendale commenced an engagement of fifteen nights with the petite comedy called "Naval Engagements:" *Admiral Kingston*, Mr. Chippendale; *Miss Mortimer*, Miss Taylor; the evening concluding with the farce called "A Chaste Salute:" *Thibeaut*, Mr. Chippendale; *Madame Thibeaut*, Miss Taylor. This lady performed also *Donna Isadora*, in the comic opera of "Brother and Sister;" *Graceful*, in "Fair One With the Golden Locks;" *Grace Harkaway*, in "London Assurance;" *Virginia*, in "The Lost Letter;" *Sally Scraggs*, in "Sketches in India;" *Whiskers*, in "Wilful Murder;" and *Miss Darlington*, in "A Roland for an Oliver."

This being the last engagement performed in the West by that amiable young lady and pleasing actress, I subjoin a short sketch of her life:—

Miss Mary Celia Taylor was born in America, about 1826. Her father was for many years a valuable member of the orchestra of the Park Theatre, New York. She made her first appearance as an actress at Wallack's National Theatre, New York, February 19, 1838, in a burletta, in the character of *Cupid*, being then about twelve years of age.

As a child she possessed a very delightful voice, and was early pressed into the chorns service of the Park, and afterwards at the National, where we find her efforts in the performance of "Amelia," as a leading chorister, were so conspicuous as to attract universal attention, although so young. In 1840 we find Miss Taylor at the Olympic (Mitchell's), New York, where she remained nine years. She then came South and West, and was with Ludlow & Smith in 1847. For two or three seasons, she "starred" at the Bowery Theatre and elsewhere.

Miss Taylor's two great and unfailing charms were her delicious voice, and the perfect ease and satisfaction with which she went through every work allotted to her.

As a vocalist, she was lacking in feeling and expression; as an actress, she had been so thoroughly drilled into a pert sauciness of manner in the Olympic burlesque that it clung to her in every character; and her *Cinderella*, in the ball-room scene, seems in reality to have merged from some kitchen, to which she properly belonged.

In soubrettes she was generally excellent, and nothing could

have been better than her *Lize*, in "A Glance at New York." But, "our Mary," as she was commonly called, was a favorite of the first water, and completely dazzled the eyes of her Olympian admirers, to whom her occasional faults were entirely imperceptible, especially as her private virtues and personal reputation were such as to command the respect and commendation of all. She played her last engagement at Burton's Theatre, where (having married Mr. W. Ogilvie Ewen, on the 7th of November, 1851) she bade adieu to the profession on the 3d of May, 1852, in the character of *Marie*, in the "Child of the Regiment;" *Pauline*, in "Delicate Ground;" and *Sophia*, in the "Happiest Day of My Life."

This lady died suddenly in New York, November 10, 1866, aged about forty years. She was deeply regretted by all who knew her, and who highly respected her for her many virtues and amiable manners.

As Miss Taylor was very ably supported by Mr. W. H. Chippendale in her last engagement with Ludlow & Smith, I insert a short sketch of his life: William H. Chippendale was born in England, and in early life was a printer; worked on the first edition of Scott's early novels, for the Messrs. Ballentyne, publishers in Edinburgh. He came to America in 1836, and opened at the Park Theatre, New York, September 1, 1836, as *Sir Mark Chase* ("Roland for an Oliver"); came to New Orleans in 1845. He married Mrs. Abbott (his second wife), in Mobile; returned to England about 1852; was stage-manager for Buckstone, at the Haymarket Theatre, London, and is now living in retirement in London.

On the 19th of July, Miss Julia Dean commenced an engagement, in the character of *Julia*, in the "Hunchback." She performed ten nights in all, during which she enacted the following characters: *Evadne*; *Ion*; *Margaret Elmore*, in "Love's Sacrifice;" *Countess*, in Knowles's play of "Love;" *Mrs. Oakly*, in the comedy of the "Jealous Wife;" *Bianca*, in Maturin's Italian tragedy of "Fazio;" *Marianna*, in Knowles's play of "The Wife;" and for her benefit, *Juliet*, in "Romeo and Juliet." This engagement of Miss Dean was very successful.

July 29th, one of the nights of Miss Dean, I performed in the farce of "Animal Magnetism," in the character of *Le Fleur*; after which I left for New York, for the purpose of making engagements for the ensuing winter season.

July 30th, Mr. N. B. Clarke took a benefit, and Miss Dean performed *Marianna*, in "The Wife," Mr. Clarke appearing

on that occasion as *St. Pierre*, and in the afterpiece as *Strapado*, in the "Mountain Devil."

As this was the last season of Mr. N. B. Clarke with us, I here insert a short biography of him:—

N. B. Clarke made his first appearance in New York, at the Bowery Theatre, as *Quasimodo* in the melodrama of "Esmeralda," September 3, 1848. His real name was Belden. His father designed him for the pulpit, but he preferred the stage. He was playing in New York in 1863. Mr. Clarke (or Belden) died in New York on April 13, 1872. He was born in Connecticut, in 1810, and was sixty-two years of age at his death. His father was a clergyman. He was in the companies of Ludlow & Smith from about 1839 to 1847. His first appearance on any stage was at the Chatham Theatre, in 1830, as *Lord Rivers*, in "The Day After the Wedding." His last appearance was at the Old Bowery Theatre, as *Jack Rivers*, in "Bertha, the Sewing-Machine Girl." He was a man universally esteemed for honor and integrity.

August 16th, Madame Ciocca, an Italian danseuse, assisted by Signor Murra, began an engagement of six nights, but their style of dancing, though artistic, did not suit the taste of the St. Louis audiences; consequently, the engagement was a failure.

August 26th, Mrs. Henry Lewis, her husband, and daughter, La Petite Bertha, commenced an engagement for six nights only, during which time Mrs. Lewis performed *Imogene*, in the tragedy of "Bertram;" *Lady Randolph*, in Horner's tragedy of "Douglas, or The Noble Shepherd;" *Clothilde*, in "The French Spy;" *Margaret of Burgundy*, in "La Tour De Nesle;" *Constance*, in "The Love Chase;" *Esmeralda*, in the drama of that name; and *Florinda*, in "The Apostate." La Petite Bertha, her very interesting little daughter, performed several characters during this engagement,—*Young Norval*, in "Douglas;" *Walter*, in "The Idiot Witness;" and *Little Pickle*, in the comic opera of "The Spoiled Child." She was a very great favorite with the St. Louis audiences. Mr. Lewis was a low comedian of considerable merit, and a very useful man in a theatre. He was at one time stage-manager for Ludlow & Smith.

September 3d, Miss Julia Dean began another engagement of seven nights, including her benefit, performing during this time *Evadne*; *Bianca*, in "Fazio;" *Pauline*, in "Lady of Lyons;" *Adelgitha*, in the tragedy of that name; *Countess*, in "Love;" *Marianna*, in "The Wrecker's Daughter;" and for her benefit, *Mrs. Haller*, in

the tragic play, from Kotzebue, called "The Stranger;" the evening concluding with the comedy, in three acts, of "The Soldier's Daughter." This engagement of Miss Dean was quite a success.

Monday evening, September 13, 1847, Mrs. Louisa Hunt commenced an engagement, which was extended to thirteen nights. This charming little actress opened with Knowles's comedy of "The Love Chase," concluding with the farce of "The Young Scamp;" in the former she enacted *Constance*, and in the latter *Joseph*, the young scamp, and both characters were performed in a way that but few have been able to equal. The next night she performed *Ion*, in Talfourd's tragedy of that name. Third night, *Rosalind*, in "As You Like It;" concluding the night with the *Widow Brady*, in the farce of "The Irish Widow." Fourth, with the *Unmentionable*, in "The Devil in Paris," in which she appeared in various forms; concluding the evening with *Minnie*, in the farce of "Somebody Else." The following night she performed *Donna Olivia*, in the comedy of "A Bold Stroke for a Husband," with the farce of "The Young Scamp." The next night was repeated "Somebody Else;" after which the "Four Sisters," concluding with "Is She a Woman?" On the following night the tragedy of "Isabella, or the Fatal Marriage;" concluding the night with the farce of "Grist to the Mill," in which she performed *Francine*. Next night, "Perfection," "Four Sisters," and "Eton Boy." Next night, "Youthful Days of Richelieu" and "Eton Boy." The following night, "Grist to the Mill" and musical extravaganza of "Fortunio." Next night, "Bold Stroke For a Husband" and "Fortunio." Next night, "Youthful Days of Richelieu" and "Fortunio." Her last night and benefit, September 27th, "Lady of Lyons" and "Fortunio."

Mr. Dan Marble commenced an engagement on September 28th, in "Sam Patch in France." He performed eleven nights, including his benefit, to very good business.

On October 4th, that excellent actress and amiable lady, Mrs. Russell, Sr., took a benefit, performing *Mrs. Tiffany*, in Mrs. Mowatt's comedy of "Fashion." Her benefit was well attended. Other members of the company put up their names for benefits, but they made but little, if any thing, by them. October 14th, Mr. A. Singer made a first appearance on any stage, in the character of *Carwin*, in John Howard Payne's tragic drama of "Therese, the Orphan of Geneva." How far he succeeded I am unable to state, as I was not in the city at

the time it took place. On the 20th of October, an engagement for a few nights was made with Mdle. Dimier, a French danseuse, who was assisted by Mdle. Fanny Maubin, Mons. Schmidt, Mr. Charles, and Miss Kennerly. They performed eight nights, and were tolerably successful. Mdle. Dimier, was a very clever artist, but not pretty, and therefore did not draw as her abilities deserved. Mr. J. H. Hackett followed this engagement, commencing October 2d, as *Falstaff*, in the first part of "King Henry IV." Mr. Hackett performed only six nights, to pretty fair business. Then came the great cards of the season, the Viennese Children, forty-eight in number, under the direction of Madame Josephine Weiss. These charming little creatures, — forty-eight pretty faces, — with their tiny feet flitting about the stage in graceful steps, and clad in flowers, forming graceful figures and fantastic groupings, were to me the realization of fairy dreams; nothing could be more captivating, when brought upon the stage, under such an instructress as was Madame Josephine Weiss. This charming troop of little fairies commenced November 5th, and concluded on the 16th of the same month, having performed ten nights to crowded audiences, and to the great pleasure of all. Our summer season in St. Louis for 1847 closed on the 16th of November, with the last-mentioned performance. This season had been more remunerative than some of those immediately preceding it. The troop of Madame Weiss was engaged for our Southern theatres. The American Theatre, Poydras Street, New Orleans, after having been given up by James H. Caldwell in 1843, had been occupied by several managerial adventurers, who, after losing their credit, abandoned it one by one. Tired of trusting to these adventurers, Messrs. Dubois & Kendig, thinking to make at least as much as would amount to a reasonable rent for their property, let a man named Robert L. Place have it, — a man who had been employed by them as a book-keeper of their business, in the line of a livery-stable. This man, having had some experience in running carriages, believed that he could run a theatre as well, and started out as the manager of the American Theatre, Poydras Street. Mr. Place had been conducting this theatre, after his fashion, for two years, making no money and getting into all kinds of difficulties in consequence of not understanding the business. He then proposed to Ludlow & Smith that they should take the theatre and manage it in conjunction with their St. Charles Theatre, engaging stock actors and "stars" for both, — he remaining ostensibly manager of the

American, but acting as they should direct. This was agreed to by them, on condition that they should have a two-thirds interest in the American, and Mr. Place to be in no way connected with their St. Charles Theatre. This arrangement went into effect on the opening of the American, about the 1st of November, 1847.

CHAPTER LXII.

Season of 1847-8 in New Orleans and Mobile — Edwin Forrest — Viennese Children — St. Louis Season of 1848 — Madam Bishop — Boehsa — Reeves — Brough — Miss Dean — Mrs. Farren — Mrs. L. Hunt — G. W. Jameson — G. H. Hill — C. D. Pitt — Mme. Augusta — Charles Parsloe.

IN writing of the season of 1847-8 in New Orleans, Mobile, and St. Louis, I shall be obliged to be very brief, inasmuch as I have neither diary nor play-bills for those seasons to aid me, these having been mislaid or stolen.

The New Orleans season (St. Charles) and that of Mobile both began about the 1st of December, as was usual with us, with a good comedy and laughable farce; the St. Louis company, with several additions to them, being about equally divided between the two cities.

The first "star" of the season that I shall speak of, although it is my opinion he was not the first in the order of time, will be Mr. Edwin Forrest, who played thirty nights in New Orleans, with an interregnum of two weeks in Mobile, his thirty nights averaging \$534; his last benefit amounting to \$802. Mr. Forrest in each of these cities was paid half of the gross receipts of every night. His receipts in Mobile fell but little short of those of New Orleans.

This gentleman did not perform in our St. Louis theatre this season of 1848, for the reason that my partner would not consent to his having half receipts there, and Mr. Forrest refused to perform on any other terms.

I am of opinion that the Viennese Children were our first "stars" this season, both at New Orleans and Mobile. They danced thirty nights in the two cities combinedly, to an average of receipts amounting to \$793, of which Madame Weiss had half each night. These little children proved to be the most attractive features of the season.

A somewhat funny affair transpired with this fat German woman, Madame Weiss. She had probably been a tolerably good dancer in her youth, but now she was too fat to dance, and too ancient. She was very coarse in her manners, drank large quantities of beer, and at times was very noisy behind the scenes. She had got together about fifty pretty little

girls, aged from six to twelve years, whose parents were poor persons living in Vienna, to whom she paid certain amounts, at stated periods, at Vienna; in the meantime she was to provide every thing in the way of dresses and bodily comforts needful, until they were returned to their homes. All these conditions, I have reason to believe, she faithfully performed. But one can very readily understand how this number of young, wild creatures might try a person's patience; and the Madame was not the most patient woman in the world, and at times would forget that some of the theatres of this country were not as well contrived for keeping noises from reaching the auditorium as were those of Germany. Therefore, on some occasions, while getting her little girls into the proper situations, prior to the rise of the curtain, she would speak so loud as to be heard by the audience in the theatre; and she was not always select in her choice of words and phrases, swearing sometimes in German and sometimes in English, as it might happen. Now, when this troupe of dancers commenced in New Orleans, Madame Weiss had never seen me, my partner having hitherto transacted all the business of the firm with her. I went from Mobile to New Orleans on business at the end of their first week there, and on the night of my arrival Madame was unusually turbulent and noisy, and my partner, Sol. Smith, came to me in the box-office and said, "I wish you would go with me behind the scenes, and just listen to the language of that old catamaran, Madame Weiss; you will have to listen to it in Mobile, and you might as well prepare yourself by witnessing some of her conduct here." So, to oblige Smith, I went back and on the stage with him. We paused at the wing behind the scenes, and there she was ripping about the stage, jerking one child into this place and pushing another into that place, and occasionally swearing at the stage-carpenters because they had not got the scenery set as she wanted it, — and all shouted out at the top of her voice. In a few minutes Smith left me, and going up to Madame, said something in a low tone of voice to her, and then I noticed that they were both looking at me and talking. All at once she lowered her tone of voice, and quietly got her children into their situations, and the dancing commenced. Smith joined me soon, and his face indicated that he had succeeded in something very much to his own satisfaction. I inquired what had happened that he seemed so well pleased. He replied, "You saw how soon I cooled down that old vixen: how do you suppose it was done? I pointed to you, and told her you were the mayor of the city, who, hearing a great and unusual noise be-

hind the scenes, and thinking that there might be a riot going on, had come in your official capacity to stop the tumult and have the offenders arrested; but that I had induced you not to make any arrests until I had first spoken to her on the subject."

When the Viennese children had got through their engagement in New Orleans, Smith came to Mobile, where I was at the time, partly to get into the old woman's good graces by aiding her in the trip, and partly to notice the effect of their first night. They opened to an overflowing house,—seats and standing-room all taken up. We usually played a short dramatic piece before the dancing commenced, and we did this on their opening night in Mobile; and then Madame Weiss, thinking, probably, that being out of New Orleans, and beyond the jurisdiction of that terrible mayor, she might do as she pleased, commenced marshalling her troupe, and getting them into their places, ripping and swearing as she was wont to do. Her voice could be heard distinctly by the audience. Presently Smith came hurrying into the office, where I was, and said, "I wish you would go on to the stage; that old creature has commenced again her old habit of swearing at the children." I replied, "Of course I will go and do what I can to quiet her, but she has seen me only as the mayor of New Orleans, and will know that I have no right to assume authority as mayor of Mobile." "Never mind," said Smith; "leave it to me to manage in that respect. I made you a mayor, and will sustain you as a mayor. You have only to place yourself where she can see you, and leave the rest to me." On the stage I went, and at a little distance from them, saw that Smith was calling her attention to me. In three minutes of time she was as quiet and gentle as a lamb. Smith found me soon after in the box-office, and repeated to me how he had managed the matter. "As soon as you appeared on the stage, I directed her sight towards you. She looked for a moment, and then, turning red in the face, said, '*Verdammiss! Was is das! Mein Got!* Dot mayor hass come akin!'" "I replied, 'Yaw,' " said Smith, "and she held up her hands in despair." Smith added, that he told her this mayor had come to Mobile because he thought that they were the most interesting dancers he had ever seen, and he would never tire in seeing them, and would follow them wherever they went in America. And he said that the mayor informed him that it was reported she (the madame) was very cross to the children, and that he had become so much interested for them as to determine him to follow them, and see that they

were not cruelly treated. I will simply add, that every night the children danced in Mobile I appeared behind the scenes just about the time they were to commence their dancing, and every night Madame moved about among them as quietly as a cat hunting for mice. Madame Weiss never found out who the mayor was; her business was conducted with my treasurer, Mr. Cooke. The Viennese Children danced, on their return to New Orleans, at the American Theatre, Poydras Street, and also at the French Theatre.

These charming little dancers were the most attractive "stars" of the season, their attraction continuing even to the last night they appeared.

The Viennese dancers first appeared in America at the Park Theatre, New York, December 4, 1846. This celebrated and highly popular troupe of young dancing-girls came to America under the direction and control of Madame Josephine Weiss, from the Imperial Theatre, Vienna; and by their grace, precision, and apparent artlessness, created a profound impression, and for thirty nights in the city of New York attracted large and delighted audiences. The various ballet advertisements were entitled, "*Les Pas des Fleurs*," executed by forty-eight dancers; "*Pas de Hongrois*," "*Polk de Payson*," "*Pas de Bergers*," and "*Pas Styriene*," each by twenty-four dancers; "*L'Allemande*," by twenty dancers; "*Pas Orientale*," "*La Grande Mazurka*," "*Gallope des Drapeaux*," and "*Pas des Moissonneurs*," by the whole troupe, and "*Les Sauvages et la Miroir*," by sixteen select dancers.

Madam Bishop, with Mr. Reeves (tenor) and Mr. Brough (basso), with Mons. Bochsa (the great harp-player), performed this season with us, both in New Orleans and Mobile, to fair business.

The Ravel Family played a long and successful engagement in both cities. Miss Julia Dean performed a fortnight to good houses. Mrs. Farren played also in both cities, to very well-filled houses.

Our St. Louis season of 1848 commenced about the second week in April, with the charming little dancers, the Viennese Children, proving to be more attractive than during their former visit.

Julia Dean played an engagement early in this season, and so did Mrs. Farren; both of these ladies played to well-filled houses, and gave general satisfaction. Mr. Winchell came also, early in the season. I did not see any of his performances,

but, if I remember correctly, they were sketches of characters and ventriloquism.

That pleasant little actress, Mrs. Louisa Hunt, performed a very successful engagement. I will here insert a short biography of her: Mrs. Louisa Hunt, originally Miss Lane, was born in England, January 10, 1820, and made her *entrée* in Liverpool, as *Agib* ("Timour the Tartar"), in 1826. She soon after came to America with her mother and step-father, Mr. and Mrs. Kinlock, and made her *début* at the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, in 1827, as little *York*, in "Richard III." She commenced as a juvenile star in 1829; came West in 1830 or 1831, when she performed with me at Cincinnati in the Columbia Street Theatre, opening in the comic opera called "Of Age To-morrow," as the chambermaid, *Maria*, to my *Baron Willinghurst*. In 1833 she was attached to the Bowery Theatre. She married Mr. Henry Hunt in 1842, a popular vocalist and a fine-looking man. In 1848 she was engaged by Ludlow & Smith for the St. Charles, Mobile, and St. Louis theatres. After being with them about eight months she returned to the East, and there married a Mr. Mossop, a singer of no great ability, who died in 1849. She soon after married Mr. John Drew, who died, and left her a widow again, as she still remains. She has for many years managed a theatrical establishment of her own in Philadelphia.

Mr. George W. Jameson played a short engagement, with some success. Among the characters represented by him on this occasion was *Ingomar*, which he performed, in my opinion, better than any other person that I have seen undertake it. Mr. Jameson had a large share of histrionic ability, which availed him but little, from his neglect of the proper method for its development, and an irregular and unwarrantable course of life that injured his reputation and defeated his success. Mr. Jameson made his first appearance on any stage, in New York, at the Bowery Theatre, for the benefit of Mr. Charles Eaton, June 23, 1837, in a farce written by himself, entitled "The Chameleon," in which he personated five different characters. It was a great hit for a first appearance. Mr. Jameson at one time travelled with Mr. Edwin Forrest, and was the best support that gentleman could have had. Mr. Forrest paid him a large salary and his travelling expenses; and had he continued in this position for a few years, it would have paved the way to his fortune. Mr. Jameson's supposed connection with the "Consuelo" letters and the Forrest divorce case ruined his prospects for life, and he

died an obscure man. He was killed by an accident on the Harlem Railroad, near Yonkers, New York, October 3, 1868.

Mr. John R. Scott played a short engagement this season, with tolerable success.

George Hill played an engagement early in this season, going through his usual round of Yankee characters. As Mr. Hill filled a very important department of the Drama of the West, and as this was his last engagement with us, I here add a short biography of him:—

George H. Hill, commonly known as “Yankee Hill,” was born in Boston, October 9, 1809. He came of a musical family, his father and his brother, W. K. Hill, being well known for their musical abilities, and George played very well on the flute. I heard him once, between a play and farce, perform one of Nicholson’s most difficult concertos for the flute, for which he deservedly obtained great applause. His delineations of the peculiarities of the genuine Down-Easter—the pure, unadulterated “Yankee” of the lower class—were, in my estimation, far ahead of those of any who have attempted that peculiar line, not even excepting Dan Marble, who certainly ranked next to him. It is said Mr. Hill first got the idea of introducing Yankee character on the stage from seeing Aleck Simpson, an excellent comedian, enact the character of *Jonathan Ploughboy*, in Samuel Woodward’s drama of the “Forest Rose,” and at once concluded he could make something more of it. At this time he was only fifteen or sixteen years of age, and was in the store of a jeweller’s establishment near the Chatham Theatre. It was not long after when he joined a travelling company in the western portion of the State of New York, where, as an actor of general utility, he had an opportunity of learning the first lessons of his art. In 1828 he married a lady of Leroy, State of New York, and retired from the stage, as a stipulated condition on which the lady’s hand was bestowed upon him. Some short time after the marriage this stipulation was withdrawn, and he returned to the stage, and appeared at the Albany Theatre. His attempts of Yankee characters were at first confined to “stories,” but he finally appeared as *Jonathan Ploughboy*, at the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, and was so successful in this peculiar line that in 1832 he commenced to travel as a “star.” He was so successful that Mr. Hackett, who had been the first to attempt making the Yankee a distinctive line of business, found himself thrown quite into the shade of public favor, and abandoned it for other walks of the Drama. Mr. Hill visited Europe in 1836, and appeared at Drury Lane Theatre. He

returned to America in 1837, and in the fall and winter of that year, and beginning of 1838, performed at New Orleans, Mobile, St. Louis, and other cities of the South and West. He visited Europe again in 1838, and appeared at the Haymarket Theatre, London, with the most decided success; and gave two performances in Paris, France. He returned to America, and set up in the profession of dentist, having at his leisure studied dentistry and surgery, and to a certain extent was a successful practitioner; but his nerves were too sensitive for a surgeon or dentist, and many operations were so distressing to him that he abandoned it in disgust. In 1847 he purchased a beautiful cottage residence at Batavia, New York, where he resided at the time of his death, which occurred in September, 1849. He was not quite forty years of age at the time of his death.

Mr. Charles Dibdin Pitt, an English actor of considerable talent both as a tragedian and comedian, commenced an engagement about the middle of the season, and performed to very fair business. His acting, though not great, was in many instances pleasing. Mr. Pitt had considerable versatility of talent, performing tragedy, comedy, melodrama, and other lines, with no small degree of skill. His greatest fault was a kind of sing-song, recitative style; but who could expect any thing otherwise from a man who had "Charles Dibdin" attached to his name? O, glorious old Charles! how I have luxuriated over your inspiring old sea-songs, that did more, as it has been said, to increase the British navy than all the recruiting stations in England. I shall have occasion to say more of Mr. Pitt, in giving an account of our next New Orleans and Mobile seasons, when a list of the characters usually played by him will be given, with a few remarks on his style of acting.

The last "star" of the season was Madame Augusta (Countess St. James), who with her troupe of dancers, Monsieur Schmidt, Mr. Parsloe, and others, made a very profitable and pleasant conclusion of our summer season of 1848 in St. Louis. As Mr. Parsloe was not only a good comic dancer, but also a good comic actor, especially in pantomime, I will add here a short biography of him:—

Charles T. Parsloe was born in London, about 1805. His early career was in the minor theatres of that city, and in a subordinate position, that of a ballet-boy, from which in time he rose to performing small speaking characters; but his best efforts were in the performance of *Monkey*. I have seen him perform *Monkey*, in the pantomime of "La Peyrouse," as

well as Gouffe or François Ravel could have done. He was clever, too, in *Scaramouch*, in the pantomime of "Don Juan;" and I've seen him do some country boys in a very clever manner, as *Stephen Harrowby*, and those of the same grade, provided they were of no great length, for his study was not good. He made his first appearance in New York at the Park Theatre, on the 2d of October, 1830, as *Nondescript*, in "Peter Wilkins," hailing at the time from Covent Garden, London. In 1831 he was with me in Louisville and Cincinnati; at Mobile and St. Louis in 1837, where he "starred" it in monkeys and other animal characters. He at one time was engaged at Burton's Theatre, New York, where he performed small business; was afterwards a theatrical agent. He died in New York, September 22, 1870, aged about sixty-five years.

This season proved to be the most profitable one that we ever made in St. Louis. It closed on Saturday, November 11th, and the company embarked two days after on a steamboat for New Orleans, arriving in that city about the 26th of the same month.

During the St. Louis season of 1848, Ludlow & Smith were informed that it was the intention of a certain number of gentlemen of New Orleans to erect in that city another theatre, which was to be rented to a manager who would bring a good company of performers, of such a kind as they should designate, and would also grant such privileges to the stockholders as they should require at the commencement of each season. Among these privileges were to be the following: Every stockholder subscribing a certain amount to have a seat exclusively under his control, in a portion of the parquet set apart and handsomely fitted up, and known as "stockholders' seats." They were also to have a room conveniently situated, as a retiring-room during the performances, and known as the "club-room." There were other privileges, not necessary to enumerate, but which had never prevailed in the theatres under the management of Ludlow & Smith. That firm, having reason to believe that James H. Caldwell — of *crushing* memory — had something to do with this movement of a new theatre, took occasion at the proper time to inform that gentleman that they had no further use for his theatre at Mobile.

CHAPTER LXIII.

New Orleans Season of 1848-9—Cholera—Mr. Vandenhoff—Mrs. Melinda Jones—Mr. Fleming—Opera—Miss Brienti—Mr. Manvers—Mr. Brough—Heron Family—Mr. Macready—Monplaisir Troupe—Biography of Dan Marble—Edwin Forrest's Last Engagement and Biography.

THE New Orleans season for 1848-9 commenced with our opening of the St. Charles Theatre, November 23d. The American Theatre, Poydras Street, had been open about two weeks when we arrived, but the business had not paid any profit, and Mr. Lucius Place, acting as agent for his brother, Robert L. Place, desired to wind up that establishment, and have nothing more to do with theatricals. To this proposition Ludlow & Smith gave their consent, and on the 25th of December they ceased to have any connection with the American Theatre. This house remained closed for some considerable time, and became the property of the owner of the ground, Mr. Charles Morgan, who finally sold it to a citizen of New Orleans, who tore down that and other buildings on that square, and erected a splendid edifice, known many years after as the Moresco buildings.

I am sorry to be compelled to refer once more to an act of injustice perpetrated by my former partner, Sol. Smith, in a book published by him just before his death, in which he says, at page 211: "This was a cholera season; my partner went to his villa at Mobile, and I was left to make headway alone against the horrible epidemic in the best way I could." Now, in regard to this act of mine here referred to, the facts were these: My family residence was in the suburbs of Mobile; I had been away from home, on business for the firm, over six months, and visited my family, where I remained about two weeks. There was no immediate necessity for my presence in New Orleans. Mr. Smith, who had his family with him, had been attending to the business of the St. Charles Theatre for several seasons, while I had attended to that of Mobile, for reasons previously given by me. And as to the acting part of the business, my place was ably filled by Mr. George Vandenhoff, who commenced with the season. Therefore there was no good reason for these remarks made by him

in his book, and I cannot but consider them as proceeding from a desire to injure me in the estimation of his readers. As to the horrid epidemic that he speaks of in New Orleans, there was no epidemic of any kind existing at that time in the city. There were a few scattered cases of cholera, which were magnified by newspapers of distant cities into an epidemic; these had the effect to frighten the timid, and prevent them for the time from visiting the city. Among this class of persons was Mr. W. C. Macready, the tragedian. He had an engagement with us, which was to commence late in January, 1849. He had reached Charleston, South Carolina, early in January, on his way to New Orleans; but picking up a newspaper of that city containing a highly exaggerated statement of the cholera existing in New Orleans (to which he was journeying), he decided to remain where he was until he should learn more in regard to it. He wrote to us from Charleston, and Smith telegraphed to him an answer. The number of cases of cholera did increase about the latter part of December, but even then could not properly be called epidemic. As Smith says, Mr. Hackett was telegraphed to come and take the nights that had been designed for Mr. Macready, and he came, and played to very fair business under the circumstances — of a supposed epidemic.

The New Orleans season of 1848–9 commenced on Thursday, November 23d, with Sheridan's excellent comedy of the "School for Scandal:" *Sir Peter Teazle*, Mr. Chippendale; *Lady Teazle*, Mrs. Mary Stuart. A dance between the play and farce, by Miss Josephine; the evening concluding with the farce of "Box and Cox." The following ladies and gentlemen were members of the stock company of Ludlow & Smith in New Orleans for this season: —

Mr. W. H. Chippendale, Mr. George Vandenhoff, Mr. Morton, Mr. Watson, Mr. Fuller, Mr. James S. Wright, Mr. Richard F. Russell, Mr. Uhl, Mr. Coad, Mr. English, Mr. Thorpe, Mr. Schoolcraft, Mr. McDonald, Mr. Ernest, Mr. Page, Mr. Conden, Mr. Allen, Mr. McMillan, Mr. Everett, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Fredericks, Mr. Fitzgerald, Mr. Sinclair, Mr. Dougherty, Mrs. Melinda Jones, Mrs. Mary Stuart, Mrs. Charles Fisher, Mrs. Russell, Mrs. R. F. Russell, Mrs. Fuller, Mrs. Cantor, Mrs. McMillan, Mrs. Clarke, Miss Verity, Miss Josephine, Miss Coad, Miss King, Miss Imogene.

The first "star" announced for the season was Mr. George Vandenhoff, who, though actually engaged for the entire season, was allowed in his engagement the distinction of being announced as a "star." His character was to be one ranked as

equal, or nearly so, to that of the "star" premier of the night. This gentleman was esteemed a very excellent actor.

On the fourth night of our New Orleans season the tragedy of "Bertram" was performed, giving an amateur actor of New Orleans an opportunity of appearing in the character of *Bertram*. I was not in the city at the time, but was told by a member of the company that it was "a clam opening," which meant, in the theatrical slang, that he opened and closed on the same night. The gentleman appeared under the name of Mr. Wallace; what became of him I never heard.

Mrs. Melinda Jones, who was engaged for the season, made her first appearance in New Orleans November 30, 1848, as *Pauline*, in the "Lady of Lyons," Mr. Vandenhoff enacting *Claude Melnotte*; *Colonel Damas*, Mr. Chippendale.

Mr. Charles Dibden Pitt, an English actor, made his first appearance in New Orleans on the 9th of December, in the new play called "Gissipus, or the Forgotten Friend," in which he enacted the title rôle. Mr. Pitt acted twelve nights, appearing in the following characters: *Hargrave*, in the new play called "The Cavalier;" *Macbeth*, *Sir Giles Overreach* in "A New Way to Pay Old Debts," *Richelieu*, *Othello* to Mr. Vandenhoff's *Iago*, Mrs. Stuart as *Desdemona*, and Mrs. Melinda Jones as *Emilia*. For his first benefit Mr. Pitt performed *King Lear*, concluding the evening with *Petruchio*, in "Catharine and Petruchio." December 17th, "Othello" was repeated, with Mr. Pitt as *Iago* and Mr. Vandenhoff as *Othello*. December 18th, Mr. Pitt enacted *Don Leon*, in Beaumont and Fletcher's comedy, "Rule a Wife and Have a Wife;" after which he performed *Massaroni*, in the musical drama of "The Brigand." The following night he appeared as *Hamlet*; next, *Shylock*; concluding with *Massaroni*. The next night the character of *Hargrave*, in a new play entitled "The Cavalier, or England in 1660;" concluding the evening with the character of *Felix de Rosalvi*, in the little drama of "The Hunter of the Alps." Next night, *Julius Cæsar*; *Brutus*, Mr. Pitt; *Cassius*, Mr. Vandenhoff. Next night, benefit of Mr. Pitt, when he enacted *Richard III.*, December 23, 1848. This was the last engagement of Mr. Pitt in New Orleans. This gentleman was a very clever general actor, but not great in any line. His best specimens of acting were in characters of the melodramatic line; his Shakespearian characters were only mediocre. There was a great sameness in his personations; he could never divest himself of himself,—he was always Mr. Pitt. There was always a certain suavity of manner that clung to him in every action of his life, off or on

the stage. He had a very musical voice, which he used even to tiresomeness. I presume he had studied, in some degree, Mr. John Walker's principles of elocution in regard to the rising and falling inflexion of the voice; but his manner of using them ran into what I should call a caricature of them. Mr. Pitt was about thirty years of age, I should suppose, when I saw him in 1849; about five feet eight inches in height, well-proportioned, and of light complexion. Most of his career as an actor had been in the provincial theatres of his own country, England. He had performed in London just before coming to America, where he met with some success. His first appearance this side of the Atlantic was at the Park Theatre, New York, November 8, 1847, in the character of *Hamlet*. He last performed in the United States at New York, in the spring of 1861. Shortly after he returned to England, and has never visited us since.

Mr. Fleming commenced a short engagement on the 24th of December, in the character of *Hamlet*, he afterwards performed the *Stranger*, *Romeo*, *Othello* to the *Iago* of Mr. Vandenhoff; *Richelieu*, with *Sergeant Austerlitz*, in the afterpiece of "The Maid of Croissy," for his benefit and last night. On the 4th of January, 1849, Mr. Hackett commenced an engagement of fifteen nights, during which he performed *Falstaff* nine nights, commencing with the first part of "Henry IV.," which he acted four nights, and on the 9th of January the "Merry Wives of Windsor," in which he acted *Falstaff* five times. In the first-named play, *Hotspur* was performed by Mr. Vandenhoff, and *Prince Hal* by Mr. Morton; and in the latter, *Ford* and *Page* by the above named gentlemen; *Mrs. Ford*, Mrs. Melinda Jones; *Mrs. Page*, Mrs. R. Russell. January 22d, Mr. and Mrs. E. S. Conner commenced an engagement of six nights with a new American play, founded on the early history of Virginia, entitled "The Forest Princess." I did not see this play, — I was not in New Orleans at the time, — but I presume it was not a success, for it was not repeated until their last night and benefit, and then as a secondary piece of the night. This play, I was told, was the production of Mrs. Conner. They performed in the engagement "The Youthful Queen," "Where There's a Will There's a Way," "Charles XII.," "Fortesa the Usurer," "A Night of Expectation," "Fascination," and "Lady of Lyons." On the 26th of January a benefit was given to Mr. J. H. Durivage, author of the play called "Fascination." On this occasion Mr. J. M. Weston appeared, for the first and only time this season, as *Mr. Oblivious Top*, in the farce of "A Man Without a

Head." The evening concluded with a local drama, entitled "A Glance at New York in 1848." This night's receipts were only tolerably remunerative to Mr. Durivage. January 29th, an opera combination consisting of Miss Brienti, Mr. Mauvers, and Mr. Brough was engaged for one week. On their first night they gave "The Postilion of Lonjumeau;" the second night, "Rob Roy;" third night, repeated "Postilion of "Lonjumeau;" fourth, "Guy Mannering;" fifth, "Fra Diavolo;" sixth, repeated "Fra Diavolo;" seventh and last night, "La Sonnambula," concluding with "Rob Roy," for the benefit of Miss Brienti. February 5th, the Heron Family, consisting of Mrs. Heron and her daughters, Matilda, Fanny, and Agnes. They began with a petit drama called "Old and Young, or the Four Mowbrays:" The *Four Mowbrays*, by Miss Matilda Heron; *Peggy*, Miss Fanny Heron; after this they gave a musical olio, concluding with the Comic Opera called "The Waterman:" *Tom Tug*, the waterman, Miss Matilda; *Robin*, Miss Agnes; *Wilhelmina*, Miss Fanny. The beautiful old music of this opera was well sung by these little misses. During their engagement they performed "The Spoiled Child," "Irish Tutor," "Born to Good Luck," "Young Widow," "Why Don't She Marry," "Box and Cox," and their last night and benefit, the last act of "Richard III.:" *Richard*, Miss Matilda; *Earl of Richmond*, Miss Fanny. Their benefit was a good one. The eldest of these sisters, Matilda Heron, became notorious by her after-life. She was one of the earliest performers of the celebrated character of *Camille*, in a play translated by her from the French. This play, which ought to have been hissed from the stage on the first night of its representation, for its bad moral effect, became popular from the skilful rendition by Miss Heron of the principal character. She was not to be blamed for it, but the vile taste of a certain class of people, who will visit any place and applaud any thing that will cater to their degraded passions. As David Garrick said once, "Those who live to please, must please to live." Miss Heron was unquestionably a woman of genius and talent, but, for want of a proper judgment to direct them, they proved a curse to her. Her death was obscure and sad, leaving behind her a very young and interesting daughter, who, it is to be hoped, will profit by learning what a turbulent, unhappy life was that of her mother, and avoid following in her footsteps.

Mr. Macready, having gotten over his cholera fright, arrived in New Orleans, and commenced his engagement on Monday

evening, February 12, 1849, in the character of *Hamlet*. The receipts of that night were \$1,304.75. His engagement extended to four weeks, during which he performed twenty-two nights, enacting the following characters: *Hamlet*, *Richelieu*, *Othello*, *Shylock*, *Virginius*, *King Lear*, *Ingo* to Mr. Vandenhoff's *Othello*, *Brutus* in "*Julius Cæsar*" (*Mark Antony*, Mr. Vandenhoff; *Cassius*, Mr. Ryder, a gentleman who travelled with Mr. Macready), *Lord Townley* in the comedy of the "*Provoked Husband*" (performing the same night *King Henry IV.*, in the fourth act of the second part of that play, the *Prince of Wales* being Mr. Vandenhoff; the comedy was the concluding piece, and compressed into three acts), *Macbeth*, *Cassius* (Mr. Vandenhoff as *Brutus*, Mr. Ryder as *Mark Antony*), *King John* (Mr. Vandenhoff as *Falconbridge*), *Joseph Surface* in "*School for Scandal*" done in three acts, *Cardinal Wolsey* in "*Henry VIII.*," *Werner*, and for his farewell benefit and last appearance, *Hamlet*.

March 28th, the Monplaisir Troupe of Dancers commenced, and performed three nights only. This ballet company consisted of Mons. and Madame Monplaisir, Mdle. Anne Bulun, Mdle. St. Clair, Mdle. Blondeau, Mons. Corbet, Mons. Corby, and Mons. Grossi. They gave some dances and a light ballet or two in very clever style, but did not draw.

April 1st, Mr. Dan Marble began an engagement of ten nights, which proved tolerably remunerative; and with this engagement our New Orleans season of 1849 closed, on April 10th. This was the last engagement that Mr. Marble played in that city. He went to St. Louis, performed an engagement in the theatre of Ludlow & Smith, started for Louisville, and died of cholera on reaching there.

As this gentleman was a prominent feature of the Western Drama, I herewith submit a biography of him: —

Danforth Marble, familiarly known as Dan Marble, — and many persons supposed his Christian name was Daniel, — was born at Danbury, Connecticut, in 1807. In early life he was placed in a dry-goods store at Hartford; this he left to learn the trade of silversmith, in New York. There he joined an amateur company, soon after went behind the scenes of the Chatham Theatre, and on the 11th of April, 1831, he induced Mr. Nelson, prompter of that theatre, to allow him, for the consideration of \$20, to appear as *Robin Roughead*, in the farce of "*Fortune's Frolics*," for Mr. Nelson's benefit. His second appearance was in *William*, in the drama of "*Black-eyed Susan*." His third, when he appeared under his own name, was at the Richmond Hill Theatre, as *Damon*, in

“Damon and Pythias,” March 6, 1832. Many persons who remember Dan Marble will smile at the idea of his ever thinking he could enact a part like *Damon*. But he was far from being the only comic actor who has fancied he had abilities as a tragedian; many of the best comedians that have been known on the English stage had at one time the same mistaken idea of their histrionic capabilities. A few years later he gained some reputation in country theatres for Yankee “stories,” and the performance of one or two Yankee characters. But the first great effort of his, and one that established his reputation, was enacting the character of *Sam Patch*, in a piece written for him, of the same name, and performed in Buffalo at the close of 1836 or beginning of 1837. With this and other characters he travelled through the South and West, generally drawing full houses. In July, 1838, he made his first appearance on the stage of the Park Theatre, as *Solomon Swap*, in the comedy originally known as “Who Wants a Guinea?” altered by Mr. Hackett from the character of *Solomon Gundy*. In 1844 he sailed for Europe, and made his first appearance in London on the 30th of September, at the Strand Theatre, in the “Vermont Wool-dealer,” and was highly successful. He played his last engagement at St. Louis, Missouri, under the management of Ludlow & Smith, early in May, 1849, starting immediately hence for Louisville, Kentucky. He was seized with an attack of Asiatic cholera, which terminated his existence in the latter city on the 13th of May, 1849. His funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. Charles B. Parsons, who had himself been an actor, who publicly testified to his honesty of purpose, generosity, and sincerity of heart. His providence was shown by the accumulation of twenty-five or thirty thousand dollars made by his professional abilities, which he left to his wife and children. His remains were conveyed to Buffalo, New York, where they repose in his family vault. His wife was Miss Ann Warren, daughter of the well-known and respected manager of the old Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, during the early portion of the present century, of the firm of Wood & Warren. Mrs. Marble died at Cincinnati, March 1, 1872.

As this is the last season that Mr. Edwin Forrest performed in the theatres of Ludlow & Smith, I shall now subjoin a biography of this gentleman: Mr. Forrest was born in Monroe Street, Philadelphia, March 9, 1806. He was of Scotch-American descent. It is stated that in the shop of his brother, who was a tanner and currier, in Second Street, Philadelphia, young Forrest made his first histrionic effort. This was a reci-

tation on a stone table for dressing leather, and the recitation was for the amusement and edification of the workmen of the shop. While a clerk, afterward, in an importing house, the boy devoted much of his attention to plays and players, which his employer rebuked, saying, "Edwin, this theatrical infatuation will be your ruin!" Subsequently he went on the boards of the South Street Theatre, and was the "star" of a Thespian Society. In 1817 he appeared at the Apollo Theatre as *Lady Anne*, in "Douglas." A biographer says: "His costume on that occasion consisted of thick, heavy shoes, coarse woollen stockings, and a short white dress, which reached to his knees only, and a red scarf around his head." He rose somewhat higher soon after, being cast at the Trivoli Gardens as *Young Norval*, in Home's tragedy of "Douglas." In the same year (1820) he made his first regular appearance at the Walnut Street Theatre, as *Young Norval*. He met with but little encouragement in this appearance; but, having resolved to make the stage his profession, bent all his mental energy to achieve success. In January, 1821, he took his first benefit, appearing as *Octavian*, in the "Mountaineers."

There was no distinguished editor then to tell him to "go West;" nevertheless he did, and made his appearance in Cincinnati in 1822, as *Malfort*, in the "Soldier's Daughter." Here he played *King Richard*, and we are told that "the editor of a newspaper was called a madman for prophesying his future greatness." In Louisville he played, or attempted to play, *Othello*. "Strange as it may seem," says a biographer, "Mr. Forrest's taste was decidedly for low comedy, and he played *Blaise* and *Lubin* with much success. While in Louisville he assumed the character of a negro dandy. He suffered many privations, being obliged at one time to swim over the Muskingum River, the stream being very high and his funds very low. He boiled corn as hard as Pharaoh's heart, to keep up life in the wilds of Kentucky. After playing in different cities in the West, he joined a circus company as tumbler and rider, at a salary of twelve dollars a week, for a period of twelve months. He performed at the Albany Amphitheatre, New York State, for a wager, in a still vaulting act, eliciting shouts of laughter and applause; and made a flying leap through a barrel of red fire, at a benefit, singeing his eyebrows all off."

In January, 1824, he joined the company of James H. Caldwell, of which company I was also a member, then performing in the Camp Street Theatre. His opening character was *Jaffier*, in Otway's tragedy of "Venice Preserved;"

he made a favorable impression on the audience, considering that his announcement did not present him other than a young Western actor making his first appearance in that city. A majority of the male portion of the company were of English birth, and consequently considered there could be no tragic talent in any one not born within the kingdom of Great Britain. For my own part, I differed with them in their judgment, perhaps a little influenced by the fact that I was an American and a Western actor. Whether this was so or not, is of but little consequence now; but in the boy Edwin Forrest — then not eighteen years of age — I saw, or fancied that I saw, the foundation of a great tragedian.

Forrest remained in Caldwell's company until the spring of 1826, when a difficulty arose between them, not at all to the credit of the latter, when Forrest left his company and went to the East by the way of the Western country. He paused to perform a few nights at Albany. After playing there, Mr. Forrest proceeded to his native city, where he performed *Jaffier* for the benefit of his friend Mr. Porter, May 16, 1826, and on the 19th of the same month *Rolla*, in Sheridan's tragic play of "Pizarro." He surprised and astonished the Philadelphians; and those of them who remembered him as the wild, stage-mad boy who left them but three or four years before, could hardly believe he was the same individual.

About the 1st of June of the same year he performed *Othello*, at the Park Theatre, New York, for the benefit of Mr. J. Woodhull, of that theatre. Shakespeare says, "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune." This tide, embraced as it was by Mr. Forrest on this occasion, floated him on to good fortune as surely and rapidly as it ever did any man I ever heard of.

The people of New York greeted the young tragedian with the most enthusiastic applause, and took him at once into their favor. Mr. Gilfert, the manager then of the Bowery Theatre, saw in young Forrest the coming tragedian for his establishment, and made overtures the next day for an engagement with him for a year. They soon agreed on terms, and Mr. Forrest commenced his career in the Bowery Theatre, November 6, 1826, in the character of *Othello*.

I do not believe there ever was a young actor received with more enthusiastic applause. He continued with Mr. Gilfert several seasons, as the leading tragedian of his theatre, and every season becoming more and more the idol and pet of the visitors of that house. After the death of his friend, Mr. Charles Gilfert, in July, 1829, Mr. Forrest performed in dif-

ferent theatres, and gradually commenced a system of "starring."

In 1834, a public dinner was given in New York to the young tragedian, when a gold medal was presented to him, with high and gratifying encomiums engraved on it. Mr. Forrest, on receiving the medal, expressed his estimation of the gift in a neat and graceful speech.

In 1836, Mr. Forrest visited England for the first time, and appeared at the Drury Lane Theatre, then under the management of Mr. Stephen Price, who was also co-manager of the Park Theatre, New York. Mr. Forrest made his first appearance in London, October 17th, in the character of *Spartacus*, in the tragedy of "The Gladiator," written expressly for him by his countryman, Dr. Bird, of Philadelphia. He also performed while there *Metamora*, written for him by his friend and brother actor, John Augustus Stone. His engagement was an undoubted success. A grand banquet was given him by the Garrick Club, at which Sergeant Talfourd, the author of "Ion," presided; and on which occasion he was presented by Mr. Charles Kemble and Mr. Stephen Price with three swords that had been the property, severally, of John P. Kemble, Edmund Kean, and Talma, the great French tragedian. An original painting (a likeness of Garrick) was also given him; a painted likeness of himself, in the character of *Macbeth*, was (by permission) taken of him, to be placed in the picture-gallery of "Somerset House." While on this visit to England, Mr. Forrest became acquainted with Miss Catherine Sinclair, daughter of the celebrated English vocalist, John Sinclair, and, after a short courtship, was married to that lady, in London, June 23, 1837. In September of the same year he returned to America, introducing for the first time his young wife to the new world. In December of that year a dinner was given him in his native city, on which occasion his friend Gen. Swift presided, and he was warmly welcomed back among his friends of the Quaker City.

During the winter and spring of 1838, Mr. Forrest made a professional tour through the Southern and Western States, taking with him his young and beautiful wife, who charmed everybody who had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with her, by her pleasant manner and graceful bearing. Although Mr. Sinclair, her father, was a professional vocalist, his daughter Catherine had never appeared upon the stage, and it was the intention of her husband

that she never should; nor did she until after her divorce from him, in 1852.

In 1845, Mr. Forrest again visited England, and performed at the Princess Theatre, opening in the character of *Macbeth*. It was said that on this occasion he was *hissed twice*, and the hissing traced to Mr. Macready, the English tragedian. Whether Mr. Macready actually hissed Mr. Forrest, is in my mind mixed with a doubt; but, that the hissing was done by friends of that gentleman, in his presence, and in consequence of remarks made at the time by him, I have not the least doubt. This opinion of mine is predicated upon evidence obtained from other sources than either of those two eminent tragedians. Whichever way it was done, the result on the mind of Mr. Forrest was a conviction that Mr. Macready did it with a view to injure him, and from malice aforethought. This led to the retaliatory act of Mr. Forrest. While sitting as an auditor, on a paid admission, in the Edinburgh Theatre, he saw Mr. Macready enact *Hamlet*, and who so displeased him in his antics with his pocket-handkerchief, prior to the commencement of the "play scene," that Mr. Forrest hissed him, and claimed he had a right to so express his disapprobation, as an auditor, because he thought that Mr. Macready made the scene *ridiculous*, and gave it an unwarranted interpretation. If I may be allowed to express an opinion in the case, it would go to sustain Mr. Forrest in his criticism on the scene. I have been present several times, as an auditor, when Mr. Macready enacted *Hamlet*, and always thought that he had a wrong conception of that scene. Shakespeare, I cannot believe, ever intended that the Prince of Denmark should, in his affected madness, descend to idiotic buffoonery. Mr. Macready's dancing about the stage, and swinging his pocket-handkerchief in the air, and other like antics performed by him, — which Mr. Forrest called a "Pas de Mouchoir," — would induce any person to laugh, that was not so much a lover of the writings of the immortal bard of Avon as to be disgusted.

In 1851, Mr. Forrest became dissatisfied with the conduct of his wife, accused her of being disloyal to him and of having broken her marital vow, and shortly after commenced suit for a divorce from her.

After vexatious delays and tedious litigation, and much opposite and conflicting testimony from the opposing parties, a conclusion was arrived at in January, 1852, and a decree of divorce was granted by the court. But this decree was loaded with a heavy weight of alimony. Within two or three weeks after this public separation from her husband, this lady pre-

sented herself on the stage of the Lyceum Theatre, in the city of New York, as *Lady Teazle*, in Sheridan's comedy of the "School for Scandal," announcing herself as Mrs. Catherine N. Sinclair. The propriety of this action was strongly commented on by the people of New York, and no small degree of censure fell upon her. It was thought that a proper degree of female delicacy had been thrust aside to give place to one of avarice. It was thought that she was willing to avail herself of the curiosity of the public to behold one who had suddenly acquired notoriety, but certainly by no very enviable means.

It is very evident that the lady must have anticipated, while it was yet in progress, how this suit for a divorce would terminate, and she went to work, with coolness and sharp business tact, to make the most she could out of it. She placed herself, while the suit was yet progressing, under the tuition of an eminent actor then residing in New York, who undertook to prepare her for the stage.

Very few persons knew Edwin Forrest. They knew the popular tragedian, the gentlemanly companion, but they knew not the heart of Edwin Forrest; that was permitted only to those who had the occasion and opportunity to search that heart, to know the rich jewels it contained, those brightest ornaments of human nature. I doubt if there ever was a worthy appeal made to his manliness, his generosity, or charity, that did not meet with a prompt and noble response. He was not a man of many protestations; I do not believe that his own wife ever knew the great depth of his love for her, and the complete devotedness of his affections to her, up to the very hour of that fatal and most unfortunate rupture between them. In a confidential conversation with him, a short time prior to the period I have referred to, speaking of family matters, and his own childless condition, and of men who were blessed with offspring that would likely inherit their names and fortunes, he said to me, "Is it not strange, — is it not a melancholy situation for me to be in? And God knows I love my wife as dearly as ever man loved a woman." And, though not given to the melting mood, I observed the tears, like rain-drops, filling his manly eyes. Who will tell me, after this, that Edwin Forrest did not love his wife?

In 1852, Mr. Forrest performed an engagement at the Broadway Theatre, New York, of sixty-nine nights, with unparalleled success. These were consecutive nights, — an amount of physical and mental labor that has never been equalled by any actor that I ever saw or heard of.

It was said by a few mediocre actors, during the best professional days of Mr. Forrest, that he was tyrannical and overbearing in his intercourse with them during the performance of their professional duties in connection with him. As far as my observation has gone, and I have performed in the same plays with him at different times and under varied relative positions, I must say that I think this representation as above stated is most unjust. Mr. Forrest was only positive and exacting when he found persons wilfully neglecting their business, or ignorantly and stolidly refusing to be instructed in their duties. To such I have heard him say, "Do you desire to become an actor, sir? If you do, you must do your best with inferior characters, or you must never expect to perform superior ones." Or he would say, "If you do not like your profession, you should abandon it. Try something else; no person can become an actor that dislikes it, and your indifference seems to me to indicate that you are following a business that is offensive to you." Such language as this I have heard Mr. Forrest use; and where parties have assumed airs of consequence, and appeared to be offended because he had presumed to instruct them, I have heard him use stronger language, but this latter has been in only a few particular cases.

In regard to the histrionic abilities of Mr. Forrest, I would like to say more than I can with consistency introduce in this short biographical sketch. My ideas on this point are briefly expressed in the following, which I copy from the *New York Albion* of September 2, 1848:—

"Whatever difference of opinion may exist among the strictly critical on the merits of Mr. Forrest, it is not to be denied that in this country he stands preëminently the greatest histrionic favorite now living. That some extraordinary and peculiar talent has given Mr. Forrest this enviable position with his countrymen, it would be futile to deny. The *masses are with him*; and if acting, as an art, is supposed to be an exponent of nature, Mr. Forrest, in thus conciliating the suffrages of the million, must have touched the chords which vibrate in the breasts of men as a body, or he could not obtain that supremacy over the feelings of his auditors he has so long and so triumphantly exercised.

"This preëminence of Mr. Forrest over his gifted contemporaries has been with us the subject of interesting ethical disquisition, coupled as it is with the fact that this great actor has also been subjected to severe criticism by those who profess to judge him by the usual canons applied to the histrionic art.

We are inclined to believe that Mr. Forrest is not to be judged by the ordinary canonical standards of criticism, at least on his native soil. He has created a school in his art, strictly American, and he stands forth as the very embodiment, as it were, of *the masses* of American character. Hence his peculiarities. Hence his amazing success. And further, Mr. Forrest in his acting is not merely the embodiment of a national character, but he is the *beau ideal* of a peculiar phase of that character, — its *democratic idiosyncrasy*. Of this, both physically and in his artistical execution, he is a complete living illustration.

“ And all this was perhaps more palpable in his acting some years ago than it is at present, when study and experience have subdued much of his original impetuosity and disregard of the conventional rules of his art. But there is still enough left of his original leaven to characterize his performances as being distinct and peculiar. His Shakespearian characters are all stamped with the same intense energy of expression, and overwhelming display of physical force. The imbecile *Lear* and the melancholy *Dane* are in his hands frequently like enraged Titans, both in look and manner. *Macbeth* is the ferocious chief of a barbarous tribe; and his *Othello*, with all its many beauties, becomes in his hands truly the ferocious and ‘bloody Moor.’ We mean in all this to say that the courtly guise, the old world conventionalisms, which ‘hedge in the divinity of kings,’ and the polished graces that surround the great and high-born are not held by Mr. Forrest as the imperative auxiliaries of his acting. His graces and his dignity have been founded on other models; the free aboriginal of his country, erect and fearless in the freedom with which nature has endowed him, has afforded to this great actor lessons in histrionic art, which the finished artists of Europe take only from the court or the *salons*. And in striking out this originality, Mr. Forrest has touched the hearts and jumped with the tastes of a majority of his countrymen. Witness the *furor* of audiences subjected to his control, the simultaneous shouts of applause which follow his great efforts, see the almost wild enthusiasm that he kindles in the breasts of his auditors, and who will deny that Mr. Forrest has got the heart, nay, the ‘very heart of hearts,’ of *the masses*, however he may have failed to conciliate the full approbation of the strictly critical and the fastidious? The effects he produced in England and Scotland were the same. In London and Edinburgh, where the people are influenced, perhaps, to a certain extent by aristocratic associations, Mr. Forrest was

considered too strong in his delineations ; with the democratic denizens of the large manufacturing towns his success was unbounded.

“ We have noticed the gradual change that has taken place in Mr. Forrest’s acting during the last few years. He has become more elaborate and studied, — retaining, however, in passages all his original intensity. We regret the change ; it destroys the keeping of his own exclusive style, and it has served, we think, to increase his besetting sin of excessive indulgence in the emphatic stress, which has now become almost a positive blemish in his acting ; for, to carry out this, he prolongs his words to a painful degree, and frequently falls into the error of false accentuation of syllables, most grating to educated ears. It was the pride of the great masters of the art that the stage should be considered the model of correct and graceful elocution. Mr. Forrest should imitate those great exemplars of his profession, and avoid lending his vast influence to the formation of a vicious style, subversive of good taste.

“ But while we note what we conceive to be the defects of Mr. Forrest’s more matured style, we are bound to acknowledge his improvements in many of the great essentials of his art. He has acquired a depth of pathos, and a finish in the expression of the softer passions, eminently marked and beautiful. His attitudes, too, are more graceful, picturesque, and artistical. He gave an exquisite illustration of these improved effects on his acting, on Monday evening, in the delivery of *Othello’s* “ Farewell,” — striking the attitude of *Laocoon* with graphic fidelity, he poured forth that matchless speech with a depth of pathos and touching beauty that was actually electrical on the audience, and drew down long and continued plaudits.”

In regard to the Macready-Forrest riot of the Astor Place Opera-house, in May, 1849, I have good reasons for believing that Mr. Forrest made use of every means within his control to prevent any riotous demonstrations against Mr. Macready. He strongly objected to such a course being resorted to, although he did not anticipate any thing like the serious results that finally transpired. His policy was to *play Macready down*, which he believed he could do, and for which he had made preparations some weeks in advance of the commencement of Mr. Macready’s engagement in New York. His wish was to avenge himself in that more dignified and honorable manner, and not to assail his antagonist by artfulness and trickery, as he honestly believed Mr. Macready had done in

regard to him on the occasion of his last appearance in London.

Mr. Forrest had made an engagement with Mr. Marshall, manager of the Broadway Theatre, in the spring of 1849, by which he was to give a series of performances of the most popular plays in this great tragedian's *repertoire*, cast in the most efficient way and with all the necessary and effective accessories to produce the plays in a proper and attractive manner. As a proof of this, all who were familiar with and remember the Broadway Theatre at that time, will recollect the unprecedented success of that establishment during Mr. Forrest's engagement of three weeks, which took place about the same time (commencing a few nights before) that Mr. Macready's commenced at the Astor Place Opera-house. Had Mr. Macready been permitted — as was Mr. Forrest's wish — to perform his engagement as then fixed upon, he would have signally failed, and Mr. Hackett and Mr. Niblo, managers of the Opera-house for the time, would have been heavy losers by the result; and this was another reason why Mr. Forrest wished that Mr. Macready should be permitted to perform, for he thought that Mr. Hackett had behaved in an unfriendly way towards him.

That Mr. Forrest had nothing to do with the party who were the rioters at the Opera-house on the night of Mr. Macready's appearance there, was proven by an article that appeared in the *Courier and Enquirer*, of New York (a newspaper that sided with Mr. Macready), signed by Col. James Watson Webb, the editor, and couched in these words: "It is quite certain there is no evidence of Mr. Forrest being a party to the proceedings [referring to the riot], and we are bound to assume he was not."

There were persons in New York that had been warm admirers of Mr. Forrest about the time of his earliest professional efforts in that city, and whose youthful admiration had grown to strong devotion; and these men, not understanding — for they could not be reached, numbering as they did by hundreds — what Mr. Forrest's plan of redress might be, and thinking of nothing but avenging their favorite's wrongs, proceeded in their own and most direct way, as they deemed it, and moved in the matter really contrary to Mr. Forrest's wishes; and no one more than Mr. Forrest regretted their uncalled-for zeal in that way.

There are many of Mr. Forrest's intimate acquaintances alive at this time who could testify to these facts.

There were certain newspapers partisans of Mr. Mac

ready—that assumed an imperious and violent tone of defiance towards those who were the supporters of Mr. Forrest, and were mainly the cause of the second and most fatal night's conflict and its dreadful results.

Mr. Forrest had a great horror of the shedding of human blood; he was not a ruffian in his nature, although he was a Hercules in his form. He might, when in a passion, knock a man down, but he would never draw a pistol or a knife upon him.

I shall conclude my remarks in regard to Mr. Forrest by copying portions of two well-written articles of the 15th and 27th of December, 1872, shortly after the death of the great tragedian:—

“Mr. Forrest has bequeathed the whole of his property, real and personal, for the endowment and maintenance of a home for disabled actors and actresses; where those members of the profession which he adorned, who through misfortune, illness, or old age, are incapacitated for self-support, will receive all the attention they require, and be surrounded by the memorials of that art to which their lives were devoted. Sixty acres of ground within the corporate limits of Philadelphia have been made over to the mayor and common council of that city, and their successors forever, for the furtherance of this object; and as the same mode of bequest was adopted by Stephen Girard with the happiest results, there can be no reasonable doubt that the wishes of the testator will be faithfully carried out in the present case. The value of Mr. Forrest's estate cannot be exactly set down; but we presume it will considerably exceed \$1,000,000,—a sum amply sufficient for the work to which he has assigned it. His splendid private residence on Broad Street, which has long been one of the numerous objects of interest of which Philadelphia boasts, can, with comparatively small alteration and addition, be fitted for an asylum where the inmates may not merely obtain all needed comforts and luxuries, but enjoy associations at once elevating and inspiring.

“How true it is—and why do not we bear it more strongly in mind?—that the real good or ill of a man cannot be justly estimated until he is beyond the reach of human praise or blame.

“To us there is something exquisitely touching in the thought of this rough, rugged, hot-tempered, iron-willed man, whom so many knew and nobody understood, toiling early and late from youth to old age, turning a deaf ear to entreaties and rebukes, bearing unflinchingly the neglect and scorn of the

populace once so eager to do him honor, battling with sharp disease and the advances of inexorable time, refusing to speak the word which would have converted reproach into admiration, and dying at last with the harness on,—and all for what? That he might leave behind him a perpetual home for the men and women who had engaged in the same avocation as himself, and failed where he succeeded! What a noble task, and how nobly was it wrought out!

“When that asylum becomes an accomplished and enduring fact, we had rather have the eternal gratitude which will be poured out upon the memory of Edwin Forrest by those who share his bounty, than to wear all the laurels grown behind the foot-lights from Garriek’s day to our own.

“Edwin Forrest may with propriety be called the founder of the American school of acting,—a school which, in spite of grievous faults of conception and execution, has many qualities that we could ill afford to lose. Previous to Forrest’s day, American actors were to a very great extent servile imitators of their English brethren. They were mere copyists, not inventors; and content to be such, made no attempts at native force or originality. Forrest changed all this,—changed it entirely and forever. Intensely American himself, he Americanized the stage in this country, and infused into it a national character which can never wholly depart. There was a species of magnetism in his rugged, aggressive power which revolutionized popular taste, thereby encouraging others to follow where he had led, and thus completing our emancipation from foreign precedents and standards. No actor can ever perfectly succeed here in the same department of the Drama which Forrest occupied, unless he has some of the features which Forrest first displayed. We must and will have the flavor of nationality, pure and uncontaminated, in those who aspire to theatrical renown; and that demand has brought an appropriate supply. Forrest convinced his countrymen and convinced the world that America could produce a great actor who did not strut in borrowed plumage. Stimulated by his example and his triumphs, we have now tragedians like Booth and Davenport; comedians like Jefferson, Warren, and Owens, besides a host of lesser lights, of whom there is just reason to be proud. The seal of English approbation has been set upon these specimens of home manufacture, and henceforward we need not go abroad for fit illustrators of the Drama, or for rules by which dramatic honors shall be measured and conferred.

“Forrest is dead, and the idiosyncrasies of the man may pre-

vent his loss being felt as keenly as it would otherwise have been ; but as a great actor himself, and the occasion of other and greater actors, he is entitled to, and should receive, a large award of grateful remembrance."

Edwin Forrest died at his own mansion on Broad Street, Philadelphia, December 12, 1872, aged sixty-five years, nine months, three days.

CHAPTER LXIV.

New Orleans Season of 1849-50 — American Theatre closed — Opening of first Varieties Theatre — Thomas Placide — Miss Julia Dean — Mdlle. Blangy — McKean Buchanan — Mr. Hackett — Charlotte Cushman — Mr. Couldock — Mark Smith — Biography of Mr. Holland — New Orleans Varieties — Biography of Thomas Placide — Biography of Mr. C. A. Logan — Manvers Opera Company — Mr. Ben DeBar — Mrs. Farren — Miss Dean — Mr. Charles Burke — Bates's New Theatre in St. Louis — Bateman Children.

THE St. Charles season of 1849-50 commenced on the 10th of November, with Bulwer's play called the "Lady of Lyons," the night's performance concluding with the farce of "Family Jars."

The American Theatre, Poydras Street, was closed this season, owing to the death of its late manager, Robert L. Place.

A new theatre, called the "Varieties," which had been building during the past summer and fall, was opened to the public for the first time, December 8, 1849, under the management of Mr. Thomas Placide. It was situated on Gravier Street, north side, near Carondelet Street. Of this theatre and its manager I shall say more hereafter.

Having abandoned the Mobile theatre, the joint exertions of Ludlow & Smith were confined solely to the New Orleans and St. Louis theatres.

Miss Julia Dean played three engagements this season at the St. Charles, and they were all successful. Mr. McKean Buchanan, an amateur actor of New Orleans, played one week, and the result was poor houses and poor acting. After him came Mdlle. Blangy, who performed "La Giselle" and gave other attractions in the way of dancing. Receipts and performance both excellent. Then came the Heron Family, to very fair work and receipts. Then Mr. Hackett gave the citizens of New Orleans another taste of his quality, and it was liked by the people, and he liked them. James E. Murdock came next; a numerous crowd came nightly to welcome him again, and he was glad to see them. Mr. Hudson followed these, an English vocalist, who played Irish characters and sang Irish songs; but he was not as good as Tyrone Power in the former, nor as good as John Collins

in the latter. Both of these gentlemen had been seen and heard in New Orleans not long before. The receipts of his nights were only tolerable, yielding not much to actor or managers. I shall speak of this gentleman again. After Mr. Hudson came the great Charlotte Cushman, — the ever-renowned *Meg Merrilies*, a performance that will be remembered for ages; a character created by herself, which was probably never dreamed of by Sir Walter Scott, who drew the original *Meg*, and who very likely would have been astonished and gratified could he have seen Miss Cushman's rendition of it.

This lady played twenty-seven nights, to crowded houses. Mr. Couldock came with her, and was engaged by her as a support in certain characters. Mr. Couldock was an English actor of very fair abilities, correct and reliable in his business, and a gentleman in his private deportment. He is still in the profession in this country, at the time of writing this, and is universally respected.

Mark Smith, son of Sol. Smith, joined our company this season as a regular actor. Our season in New Orleans closed 29th of March, 1850, and was a profitable one to us.

As the summer of 1849 was the last that Mr. George Holland performed in the theatres of Ludlow & Smith, I desire to insert here—what should have been done in the preceding chapter—a biography of him:—

George Holland was born at Lambeth, near, London in England, December 6, 1791. In early life he had been trained to business as a travelling "commercial agent,"—what we style in America a "drummer,"—a man engaged to travel and procure orders for goods. This, however, did not suit his humor; and being a man possessing great natural comic abilities, he soon found his way to the stage, where, had he begun in the right way, and studied in the right school, he would have left behind him the reputation of being the most inimitable low comedian of his age. As a companion on a journey, or in a social party, he was the most amusing man I ever met with, in my long knowledge of more than half a century of the followers of Thespis. "Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy." Poor George! Many happy hours have we passed together! He came to America with his first wife, who was not an actress,—or at least not in this country,—in 1827, and made his *début* on this continent at the Bowery Theatre, New York, on the 12th of September of that year, as *Jerry*, in a burletta called "A Day After the Fair," in which he personated six different characters. He was, besides,

a very skilful ventriloquist, often affording, by his cleverness in that way, a vast deal of amusement to his friends; and to their children he was ever the most welcome guest, for he was a source of perfect enjoyment to them, and he appeared never more pleased than when making them happy.

As an actor he was very animated and rapid, keeping his audience in constant good humor the entire time of his being on the stage. I first met Mr. Holland at Louisville, in 1830, at which time he and his wife became inmates of my house. We met again in New Orleans in 1840-41, when under James H. Caldwell, manager of the first St. Charles Theatre. Mr. Holland officiated as treasurer, occasionally appearing on the stage as an actor. After the burning of the St. Charles Theatre in 1843, Mr. Holland returned to New York, and in 1843 was a member of Mitchell's Olympic Theatre, where he remained for six years; then made another Southern trip, and returned again to New York. From 1850 to 1857 he was a member of Mr. Wallack's company in New York.

He lost his first wife about 1834, who died, I believe, at Mobile; and in 1839 or 1840, I think it was, he married a daughter of Mrs. De Luce, formerly of the Park Theatre, New York, by whom he had several children. In 1869, Mr. Holland's health became very much impaired; old age began to press heavily upon him, and he withdrew from the stage in May, 1870, when a benefit was given him by Mr. H. F. Daly, the manager of the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York. Mr. Holland, suffering with pain, was seated on the stage while the young manager read for him to the audience a speech of thanks. Mr. Daly, to his credit be it spoken, with a liberality that I am told is native to him, had for many months continued the old actor on the pay-list, although his illness rendered his services unavailable.

After considerable bodily suffering, Mr. Holland died at his own residence in New York, December 21, 1870, aged seventy-nine years. In a short time after his death a simultaneous movement was set on foot among the profession, originating in New York, to give the widow and children of Mr. Holland benefits in as many theatres as could be obtained for such a purpose. It resulted in giving to the beneficiaries something over \$10,000.

The death of Mr. Holland was productive of a great excitement in New York, which soon extended to many of the States of this Union, and it occurred in this way: A well-known and popular comedian applied to the Rev. W. T. Sabine, rector of the Episcopal "Church of the Atonement," New

York City, to perform the funeral services of his church over the remains of the deceased George Holland. He consented to do so, until he learned from the gentleman who had applied to him that the deceased man had been an *actor*. He then positively refused to comply with his previous promise, on the ground that he had always preached against theatres and actors, and that his officiating at the funeral of an actor would be inconsistent with his past private and public denouncements of the profession.

Thus did this man avoid doing his duty as a clergyman, thus did he disgrace his calling and his Master, and thus did he endeavor to excuse an act of former injustice by committing a present offence against decency and every Christian principle. If such be *church* Christianity, I am content to be a Christian outside of the pale of the church. But I trust such conduct does not meet with approval from the Episcopal Church at large; in fact, I really believe, if their opinions could be ascertained, that a large majority of his own church condemned this act of their pastor. But, notwithstanding, I trust some good will arise from this apparently accidental occurrence. It has been found that, in the course of God's Providence, order and harmony have suddenly arisen out of confusion and discord. So may the error of this church official yet produce results totally at variance with his fanatical notions. This act of his has to a certain extent already broken down the barriers that have for ages existed between the church and the stage; it has caused candid minds to inquire into facts in regard to objections so long stereotyped against the stage, and they are finding that actors are not so bad, as a class, as they have been taught by the clergy to believe them to be. On the other side, it has been found that there are many more fair and liberal minds among church-members than the preaching of some pastors has caused actors to conceive.

Before dismissing this biography, I will add a sketch written by me in 1878 for the *St. Louis Republican*, and which appeared in that paper November 17th, as follows:—

“George Holland was one of the few men that I have met with who never grieved over whatever occurred to him in life. He was always genial, always pleasant, and as a travelling companion he was invaluable. He had always something new and humorous to relate, with the happy faculty of presenting the most frequent occurrences of life in such a ludicrous form that you would laugh heartily, and wonder that you had not seen them in that light before. As a professional actor he was

peculiar ; his style was unique, his comicality consisting mainly in the earnest and serious manner with which he uttered the funniest words. The aphorism of "There is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous" was never more fully verified than by him one day, when I met him at the steamboat wharf on Lake Pontchartrain, as I was going to Mobile, from which city he had just come. We met with our usual cordiality, and after asking him where he had been during the past summer, and what success he had met with, I inquired after the health of Mrs. Holland, his wife. Assuming one of his serious faces, with a choking utterance he told me she was dead ! Looking in his face for an instant, it appeared to me so truly comical that I was about to laugh ; but just then I beheld tears starting in his eyes, and then I was assured of the pain that was in his heart. This was his first wife, whom he married in England, and who came to this country with him. A few years after, he married an American lady, who, I believe, survives him, and who is the mother of the present George Holland, an actor of much merit, who was in this city last spring with the company performing with Mr. Sothern. I commenced this paragraph solely with an intention of giving a little anecdote regarding my old friend and brother actor, but my feelings and remembrances led me on, unmindful of my first intent, and into something like prolixity.

"An old actor, now dead, related to me some years ago an occurrence that took place in a small town of England, in days long past, when he was an actor in the same company with George Holland. The occurrence, as he related it, was after this wise : The late Thomas S. Hamblin, for many year, manager of the Bowery Theatre, New York, had at one time, previous to his coming to America, acquired some reputation in London as an actor of tragedy, having unexpectedly made a hit there in the character of *Hamlet*, and a few other leading ones. Upon the strength of this shortly acquired notoriety, he essayed to 'star' it for awhile, and succeeded in procuring engagements at a few of the small provincial towns ; among them was that wherein Holland was principal low comedian of its theatre. Now, it so happened that Holland and Hamblin, only two or three years before, had been members of some country theatre at the same time—Holland as the low-comedy man and Hamblin as the walking gentleman, technically so-called ; in other words, the third or fourth line of business. As soon as Holland heard of Hamblin's engagement, he exclaimed, 'What ! that bloody, long-spliced chap, Tom Hamblin, coming here to play leading tragedy ? Blast my eyes if I don't think

I could beat him in tragedy myself!’ When Hamblin arrived, casts were put up in the green-room on the first two nights of his acting. He opened in ‘Hamlet.’ George was cast for the *1st Grave-digger*. That was all right,—just in his line; but the second night was ‘Richard III.,’ and George was employed by *Richard* to murder the two young princes, sons of his brother, Edward IV.

‘It is an insignificant part, of but a few lines, and very disagreeable, and George went to the manager’s room to remonstrate against doing it. Holland and the manager debated the question for a few minutes, when Hamblin said, ‘George, you’ll do it for me, won’t you, for old friendship’s sake?’ To this Holland replied, ‘Why, look you, Master Tom, I wouldn’t mind obliging you; but, you see, I should spoil the whole thing. The chaps in the front of the house always commence laughing as soon as I come on the stage, and sometimes before I’ve said a word. Now, I can’t see what they find about me to laugh at, but they will do it. Why, it was but the other night, when I came on and had something very serious to say, I hadn’t got five words out when a young chap sitting just behind the orchestra burst out into a fit of laughing that quite disconcerted me. I turned to him, and looking him full in the face, said, ‘What are you laughing at?’ And then he laughed louder than ever, and half the house joined in with him. So, you see, if this should happen in your tragedy, it would be all dickey with it.’ To this Hamblin replied: ‘Well, George, notwithstanding, if you will go on for these few lines, and do your best, I’ll take the risk.’ George kindly consented, but went out of the room, saying, ‘You had better leave me out!’ Well, the night came off, the curtain went up, and George walked on at the proper time, and the dialogue commenced between *Richard* and *Tyrrel*, with only a slight, chuckling laugh among a few of the boys when George entered. That the joke may be better understood by the general reader, I will give a few lines of the play, according to Colly Cibber’s alteration of it, which has now become the usual playing edition. The reader must first understand that *Tyrrel* has been employed by *Richard* to have his two young nephews, sons of Edward IV., the lineal heirs to the throne, smothered in the Tower, where he has had them lodged. *Richard*: ‘Now, my Tyrrel, how are the brats disposed of? Say, am I happy? hast thou dealt upon them?’ *Tyrrel*: ‘If to have done the thing you gave in charge beget your happiness, then be happy, for it is done.’ *Richard*: ‘But didst thou see them dead?’ *Tyrrel*: ‘In that I thought

to ask your highness' pleasure.' *Richard*: 'I have it. I'll have 'em, sure. Get me a coffin, full of holes; let 'em both be crammed into it, and, hark thee, in the night-time throw them down the Thames. Once in, they'll find their way to the bottom.' Now, this dialogue went on all right until it reached where *Richard* says, 'And buried, my good Tyrrel?' To this Holland replied, 'Yes, your highness.' The reader can readily imagine the consternation of Hamblin at this reply. He was completely nonplussed; he knew not what to say. The game was blocked. There stood Holland, with a serious, immovable face. Hamblin, darting a look of indignation at him, turned suddenly and walked up the stage; but as suddenly returned, and walking up to Holland said, 'I have it; *dig them up again*; get a coffin, full of holes.' This sudden and singular way of Hamblin's getting out of the difficulty caused a few of the knowing ones, acquainted with the play, to roar with laughter. As soon as George could get off the stage he ran to his room, put on his overcoat, and his hat down over his eyes, and darted out of the back door of the theatre. He was seen no more until rehearsal-time next day; then, when questioned about it, declared he could not remember the right words, and so spoke what he did. However, he was heard to say afterwards that he was pretty sure that the manager wouldn't put him into any of those blarsted tragedies again."

I have said, in the early portions of this chapter, that a new theatre was opened in New Orleans this season, under the management of Mr. Thomas Placide. This was the *first* Varieties Theatre, and stood on Gravier Street. It was built by an association of gentlemen, who afterwards styled themselves the "Varieties Club." The principal starter and mover in this matter was James H. Caldwell, the "crusher," who was instigated to this one more effort to *crush* me by several motives: First, Ludlow & Smith had given up the Mobile theatre, that we rented of him, and he saw no probability of his getting any thing more out of us from that quarter; secondly, he expected that the building of this theatre would be the means of enhancing the value of some property that was contiguous, which he owned, and on which he was dwelling. He wished to leave this location and buy a residence in a more fashionable part of the city, and the building on the ground would rent well for a boarding-house, or coffee-house with a restaurant attached. It was the intention of the management of this new theatre to engage no "stars," but to rely entirely on the attractions of their stock company. During the

summer preceding the opening of this house, Mr. Placide went to Europe to engage artists for this establishment. Particular attention was to be given to the engaging of an efficient *corps de ballet*, as it was the intention to make ballet a prominent feature for the coming season. Mr. Placide spent two or three months between London and Paris without accomplishing much in the way of engagements. The fact was that Thomas Placide, although a good comedian and a clever fellow, was not calculated to fill the situation of manager of a theatre in such a city as New Orleans; in short, he was totally unfit to *manage* a theatre. He had no business qualifications. Nevertheless, he got together some very clever performers in the comedy line, and the season was a partial success. Contrary to our expectations, the opening of this theatre did not perceptibly affect the receipts of the St. Charles, although we had but one great card to play, in the engagement of Miss Charlotte Cushman. The two theatres got along in the most friendly and comfortable manner, neither feeling that the one injured the other. Mr. Placide managed this theatre until it was destroyed by fire, November 21, 1854. The proprietors commenced, without delay, to rebuild a house on the same ground, which was opened in the fall of 1855, but under the management of Mr. Dion Boucicault, who gave it the name of the "Gaieties." Mr. Boucicault remained but one year as director of this theatre, and then it passed into the custody of Mr. William H. Crisp, who controlled it for two or three years; then came Mr. John E. Owens, Mrs. Chanfrau, Mr. Baker, and others. This theatre, which had resumed its old name of the "Varieties," was burned down again, December 1, 1870. The proprietors now changed the location of their theatre, and purchased ground on the north side of Canal Street, near Bourbon Street, using for an entrance the centre building, known as one of the "Three Sisters." Here they built a magnificent theatre, which was opened to the public in the fall of 1872, and was still standing in 1879.

As probably this is the last occasion I shall have to speak of Mr. Thomas Placide, I here subjoin a short biography of him:—

Thomas Placide was born in America, at Charleston, South Carolina, in the year 1809. He was the son of Monsieur Alexander Placide, and brother of Henry Placide and of Mrs. Rufus Blake and Mrs. Eliza Mann. The first I heard of him, he arrived in New Orleans in the fall of 1825, where his sister Jane was performing in the theatre of James H. Caldwell. He appeared there a few times, but, being quite a novice, made no

impression on the public. Not being satisfied with his situation in that theatre, he left it and came to me at Mobile, in January, 1826, where he remained until the spring of that year; and when my season had concluded, left me and returned to the East.

During the summer of 1826 I found him in the city of New York, where he had made an appearance at the Chatham Garden Theatre, in the character of *Andrew Bang* in the farce of "Love, Law, and Physic." Ireland says: "A year or so after, he was engaged at the Park Theatre, where he was kept in a very subordinate range of parts until the first representation of 'Cinderella,' in 1830, when he was intrusted with the character of *Pedro*, which he played with such ludicrous effect that he extorted the warmest approbation from the most fastidious. Thereafter he made rapid improvement, and was soon acknowledged to be a very capital low comedian, and as such he played in the principal theatres in the Union. As a chaste and finished actor, however, he bears [he bore] no comparison with his elder brother, Henry." (So much for Ireland.) Thomas Placide was engaged with Ludlow & Smith for Mobile and St. Louis, as their low comedian, for the seasons of 1836-7 and 1838. He played *Dromio of Ephesus* to his brother Harry's *Dromio of Syracuse* ("Comedy of Errors"), November 6, 1848, at the Park Theatre, then under the management of Thomas S. Hamblin, Sr. In December, 1850, he became manager of the "Varieties Theatre," New Orleans, erected on Gravier Street between Baronne and Carondelet Streets. This theatre was destroyed by fire, which broke out in the building about three o'clock on the morning of March 22, 1854. Mr. Placide was asleep in a room occupied by him in the theatre when the alarm was given, and barely escaped with his life through one of the second-story windows, by means of a sheet, one end of which was attached to a piece of timber connected with the window. Mr. Thomas Placide died July 22, 1877, at "Tom's Landing," New Jersey. He was dying of a cancer in the mouth, and to end his miseries, shot himself. He had married in 1869 a Mrs. Bliss, but left no children.

The marriage of Mr. Placide with this lady was rather romantic. When about seventeen years of age, he became in love with a lady a considerable number of years older than himself. He proposed marriage to her, but she, for some reason only known to herself, declined accepting his hand. She afterward married a Dr. Hope, who in a few years died,

and left her a blooming widow with a handsome estate. A few years after, she married a Mr. Bliss, who also died, and she was once more a widow, and very comfortably situated as to worldly goods. In 1869, Mr. Placide, being then sixty years of age, having heard that Mrs. Bliss had said many kind words in regard to him, concluded to try his luck once more with her, and paid her a visit at her residence in the State of New Jersey. The lady having at this time arrived at years of discretion, or at least that period when judgment rules instead of passion, had learned to appreciate a loving and kind-hearted man, accepted his hand, and at last became Mrs. Thomas Placide, the bride being seventy-two years of age and the bridegroom sixty. It proved to be a happy marriage, until the tragic death of the husband. It was said that her deep grief was the immediate cause of her death.

Of the St. Louis season of 1850 I shall say but little. There was not much that occurred worth speaking of, or that could be likely to interest readers generally.

The first persons announced as "stars" were Mr. C. A. Logan and his daughter Eliza. They performed eight or ten nights, with only tolerable success. They had been stock performers with us only a season or two before, and the public did not seem to consider them as "stars." Mr. Logan's histrionic ability, unquestionably, was in the line of comedy. He may have had innate tragic ability, but his face prevented him from showing it to advantage: it was unchangeably comic. It has been said that Mr. Logan was intended for, and in part educated as, a Roman Catholic priest, but it was found that his face stood in his way, and would prevent his success. The priests even could not converse with him ten minutes without being seized with a fit of irresistible laughter, and he wisely concluded that he would never do for a "father confessor;" for the sorrow-stricken penitents who came to him, the moment that they looked in his face, would break out into a fit of laughter and forget all about their sins. Again, whenever he should occupy the pulpit, it was feared that his congregation, instead of bowing down their heads in prayer, would bow their heads to conceal their laughter.

A somewhat singular circumstance is said to have been the reason why Mr. Logan did not become a Roman Catholic priest. I only mention it to show upon how small a circumstance the whole current of a man's life may be turned from its originally proposed course. It was told to me by one who said he was present at the relation, that old Jack Huntley, who for many years was prompter in the theatre of Ludlow &

Smith, stated in the green-room of the St. Louis Theatre the following occurrence which prevented Mr. Logan from becoming a priest. Old Jack was a Roman Catholic, and professed to know the facts. Cornelius A. Logan, said Jack, was prevented from becoming a priest, in this way: At the same institution in which he was pursuing his studies he had a companion, also a student in theology, who was remarkable for a very peculiar expression of countenance, that Logan always contended resembled that of the ape; and the offended fellow-student would retort by telling Logan that his head resembled a large pumpkin, with two small white onions inserted for eyes, and a beet between them, with the large end down, for a nose. They wrangled for some time, in a good-natured way, when Logan proposed that they should settle the question of ugliness by a game of cards, called "all-fours," or "seven-up," sometimes known as "old sledge." The one that lost the first game was to quietly submit to be called the homeliest man. They sat down one night, with half a dozen fellow-students as spectators; they played out three or four hands, and the game stood five and five points each. Logan's opponent was dealing, and in doing so dropped a card, by accident or design, which one of the by-standers, a friend of Logan, observed, and slyly picking it up, slipped it into Logan's hand while the opposite party was examining his cards; it was the Jack of trumps. Logan dropped a useless card, which went under the table. They played the hand out, and each made two points, — Logan being "high, jack," to his opponent's "low, game," and this put them both *out*. Each claimed that he had won the game; a quarrel ensued, and then a fight, in the midst of which one of the professors entered, and the result was that the two offenders were suspended. This suspension led to a withdrawal of both students from the institution; one finally becoming a play-actor, the other a vendor of patent medicines. How true are those words of Thomas à Kempis, that "Man proposes, but God disposes." Mr. Logan died of apoplexy, on the Ohio River, February 2, 1852. His daughter Eliza died January 14, 1872.

Mr. Hudson followed Mr. and Miss Logan in an engagement of a few nights, but he was not more successful in this than his engagement in New Orleans.

Mr. James E. Murdock followed in a short engagement, to tolerable success.

The Manvers Opera Troupe came next, and sang two weeks, to very fair business.

Mr. C. D. Pitt, Mr. Ben DeBar, and Mrs. Farren followed

in quick succession, to tolerable business. Then came Miss Julia Dean, who played two weeks, to good houses and with great applause.

Mr. Charles Burke, a half-brother of Joseph Jefferson, came next, and played a fair engagement of ten nights. This gentleman was the son of Mrs. Jefferson by her first husband, Mr. Thomas Burke, for many years a popular comedian in the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, during the long management of Messrs. Wood & Warren. Mr. Charles Burke was the original of Mr. Jefferson's *Rip Van Winkle*, and from him his half-brother obtained his first conception of that character; to which he has added many beautiful touches of his own genius, making it one of the most successful plays on the American stage. Had Mr. Burke lived to a fair age, he would have been one of the finest serio-comic actors on the stage,—at least on this side of the Atlantic,—but consumption took him away from us at a very early age.

It was in the spring of this year that Mr. John Bates commenced to carry out his plan of building a theatre in St. Louis, with the view of competing with Ludlow & Smith in the engagement of "stars," and to reap a portion of the great harvest erroneously reported that they were making in that city. He had some years prior to this time erected a theatre in Cincinnati, in the management of which he had lost money every year; and so he built another one in St. Louis, in hopes, as I imagine, to make in that city what he generally lost in Cincinnati. If this was not Mr. Bates's reason for this wild undertaking, I cannot imagine any other. Mr. Bates in early life kept a confectionery and soda-water establishment in Cincinnati, and in years accumulated considerable money. Making a wide stride from this, he set up a banking-house, in connection with a foreigner, who put in brains as his portion of the capital in business, allowing Mr. Bates to put in his portion in money. This firm went on flourishingly for several years, but one fine morning the foreigner was unexpectedly found missing. In course of time this man was discovered, comfortably situated, in foreign parts, and it was reported that he was prepared to go into the banking business again with anybody who would take him as a partner. How the affairs of the banking-house of Cincinnati were settled I never learned. But Mr. Bates was not satisfied with this step of greatness, and concluded to make another into a region with which he was as unacquainted as he had been with the last; so he built a theatre, and undertook to manage it himself. This step and the next one, building another theatre in St.

Louis, gave Mr. Bates considerable experience in the way of losing money. But his money was not his only loss; he lost his son James, who undertook to manage the St. Louis theatre for, and in connection with, his father. This son died in a room of this building, as some said, from charcoal suffocation; others said from being waylaid and beaten badly. The new theatre of Mr. Bates in St. Louis was opened in the early part of January, 1851, Mr. Malone Raymond being the stage-manager. The opening address was written by Mr. Edmund Flagg, of St. Louis. This building was erected on the north side of Pine Street, about midway between Third and Fourth Streets. Mr. Bates gave up management shortly after the death of his son James, and finally sold his theatre; and for several years it was occupied and owned by Mr. Ben DeBar, and after his death, was sold at a mortgage sale for \$10,000, the amount of the debt due on it. It has been known for several years as the "Theatre Comique."

I here subjoin a short sketch of the "Bateman Children," who played an engagement in St. Louis in the season of 1850. Kate and Ellen first appeared December 1, 1849, the former (aged six years) as *Richmond* ("Richard III.") and *Little Pickle* ("Spoiled Child"), and Ellen (aged four years) as *Richard III.* and *Tag* ("Spoiled child"). They were well received. Their father, Hezekiah L. Bateman, appeared as *Old Milton*, ("Four Mowbrays"), in the same engagement. Ellen Bateman married, early in 1869, a gentleman of Lyons, France, and withdrew from the stage. Kate, in 1866, married a gentleman from London, England, I believe, by the name of Crow, but still plays as Kate Bateman. Mr. Bateman died in London, March 22, 1875.

CHAPTER LXV.

New Orleans Season of 1850-51—Mrs. Farren—Biography of Miss Dean—Bateman Children—Miss Cushman—Jenny Lind—Ravels—Macallister—Close of Season—St. Louis Season of 1851—List of Stars—Opening of Varieties Theatre in St. Louis, 1852—Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Field—Mme. Ciocca—Mdle. Baron—Monsieur Espinosa—Mr. W. H. Chippendale—Miss Lonsdale—New Orleans Season of 1851-2—"Managers in Distress"—Mark Smith—Mr. and Mrs. Swan—Mr. Barrett and Daughter—Mme. Celeste—Miss Julia Bennett—Miss Jane Davenport—Prof. Anderson—Sir Wm. Don—Snow in New Orleans—Dan Rice Sleighing—Kossuth—Ravels' Forty Nights—End of Season—Death of Henry Clay—Death of Mr. Collier—Renewal of Lease of St. Charles Theatre—Season of 1852-3—Last Engagement of J. B. Booth—Death and Biography—Thomas S. Hamblin's Death and Biography—Mrs. Mowatt—Death of J. P. Bailey—Close of Season—Termination of Partnership of Ludlow & Smith—Farewell Address by N. M. Ludlow.

THE season of 1850-51 of Ludlow & Smith in New Orleans, in the St. Charles Theatre, commenced on Tuesday, the 12th of November, with a play written by Mr. Leman, a gentleman belonging to our company. The play was entitled "The Millionaire." What success it met with I cannot say, as I was absent on a visit to my family for a few days at the time it was played. Mrs. Farren was our first "star" this season, beginning her engagement November 17th, in the character of *Mrs. Beverly*, in "The Gamester;" *Mr. Beverly* was acted by Mr. Leman. The farce of the evening was "The Eton Boy;" *Fanny*, by Mrs. Harry Chapman. This lady was the daughter of my old and early theatrical friend, Aleck Drake, of whom I have spoken in the beginning of this book. She was then a very clever actress, who was known afterwards as the mother of the "Chapman Sisters." Mrs. Farren performed during this engagement *Pauline*, in the "Lady of Lyons;" *Julia*, in the "Hunchback;" *Marian*, in "Wrecker's Daughter;" *Lucretia Borgia*, *Madeline*, in "Daughter of the Regiment;" *Evadne*, *Mary Tudor*; *Madame Duvalle*, in "Remorse;" *Duchess*, in "Faint Heart;" *Mrs. Haller*, in "The Stranger;" *Olivia*, in "A Bold Stroke for a Wife;" *Lucy Ashton*, in "Bride of Lammermoor;" *Pauline*, in a petit drama called "Filial Love;" and for her benefit, *Countess*, in Knowles's play called "Love," and a petit drama entitled "The Venetian, or the Bravo's Oath." Mrs.

Farren's engagements were always good in New Orleans; she was well known and well liked in that city.

December 4th, Miss Julia Dean commenced an engagement in the character of *Julia*, in the "Hunchback." She performed twenty nights, to very good business, going through her usual round of characters, with an addition of two or three new ones, one of which latter was *Gabrielle de Belle Isle*, in a play called "The Duke's Wager." I shall here insert a short biography of Miss Dean:—

Julia Dean was the daughter of Julia Drake and Edwin Dean, and grand-daughter of Sam Drake, Sr., the founder of the Drama in the State of Kentucky. Julia Dean was born in Dutchess County, New York, on the 22d of July, 1830, at the residence of her paternal grandparents. Her mother was a very beautiful woman and a charming actress, the admired of all admirers of female beauty and talent. The early years of Miss Dean's life were passed in seclusion, at the residence of her father's parents, who were of the class called Quakers. After her mother's death, which occurred in 1832, her father married again; and Miss Julia, when about fourteen years of age, with her father and step-mother, became members of the company of Ludlow & Smith, and were by them stationed at Mobile for the season of 1844-5. She was at that time neither child nor woman,—too large for the former, and not fully developed enough for the latter,—the consequence of which was that Miss Dean could seldom be used to any advantage. In 1845, Mr. Dean and family withdrew from the theatre of Ludlow & Smith, and went, I think, to reside in Cincinnati. I heard nothing more of Miss Dean until 1847, when her father applied to our firm for an engagement for his daughter Julia for a few nights, as a "star." For several successive seasons in New Orleans, Mobile, and St. Louis, Miss Dean performed in those theatres with success, and every year with decided improvement in her profession. In the course of a few seasons she became a great favorite in those three cities, and, I believe, in every city throughout the West, and many of those of the East.

In the very height and fullest pride of her ambitious hopes, she married. Here was another, among many instances I have known, of young actresses, after having acquired an enviable reputation on the stage, and a moderate fortune, throwing both away on some worthless young man, either for his good looks, and nothing else, or the respectability of his family name. Miss Dean, when in the very zenith of her professional success, married, in March, 1855, Dr. Hayne, son of Senator

Robert Y. Hayne, of South Carolina. From the day of her marriage her fortunes began to wane and troubles to arise, until the former had disappeared and the latter overwhelmed her. She found him a brutal husband, and the dissipated, cast-off son from an honored family. After years of trials and troubles, she was compelled to seek a release from him in a divorce court. Some time after obtaining this deliverance she married again, Mr. James G. Cooper, of New York. The husband of her second marriage was said to be a gentleman, and a good husband to her; respectably connected, but not rich.

This lady, from 1853, was well known in the city of New York, where she died March 5, 1868, aged thirty-seven years, four months, and seventeen days. She was an exemplary woman and a sincere Christian.

Mr. J. A. J. Neafie commenced an engagement on Miss Dean's eleventh night, in the character of *Julian St. Pierre*, in the play of "The Wife," and performed as a "star" for a short time, with some success.

December 24th, the Bateman children, Kate and Ellen, commenced an engagement. These children were truly wonderful, the first being seven, the second five years of age. These were the children of H. L. Bateman and Sidney Cowell, daughter of old Joe Cowell. They were very successful for a few years as children; when, arriving at early womanhood, Ellen married and withdrew from the stage, but Kate continued as an actress to this present writing, and is married to a Mr. Crow, but plays under the name of Kate Bateman. They appeared on the first night of this engagement in "Richard III.:" *Richard* by Ellen, and *Richmond* by Kate; after which they appeared in the "Swiss Cottage;" *Natz Teik*, Ellen; *Lisette*, Kate. Their second night they appeared in the "Merchant of Venice:" Ellen as *Shylock*, Kate as *Portia*; previous to which they played in the "Hunter of the Alps:" *Florio* and *Julio* by Kate and Ellen, and their father, Mr. H. L. Bateman, as *Felix de Rosalvi*. "The Young Scamp" was another of their pieces: *Joseph* (the Young Scamp), Kate Bateman. Also "Bombastes Furioso:" *General Bombastes Furioso*, Ellen; *King*, Kate. "The Spoiled Child" was another of their farces: *Little Pickle*, Kate, and *Tag*, Ellen. On the night of their first benefit, "Macbeth" (banquet scene) was performed: *Macbeth*, by Kate; *Lady Macbeth*, Ellen. January 2, 1851, they appeared in the "Children in the Wood:" the girl and boy by Kate and Ellen, *Walter* by Mr. Bateman; after which was performed

"The Day After the Fair:" *Jerry*, Kate; *Old Fidget*, Ellen. January 4th, "Black-eyed Susan:" *William* (the sailor), Mr. Bateman; *Jacob Twig*, Ellen; *Dolly Mayflower*, Kate. Same night, "Sweethearts and Wives:" *Billy Lackaday*, Ellen. Same night, "Paul Pry:" *Paul*, Ellen; *Old Hardy*, Mr. Bateman; *Phœbe*, Kate. The same night, "The B'hoys in the Basket:" *Old Moses*, Mr. Bateman; *Young Moses*, Ellen. January 5th was the last night of the Bateman children, they having performed ten nights in all, to very fair business.

Mr. John Collins commenced an engagement on the 6th of January, ending with the 19th, — fourteen nights, to very good business, — going through his usual round of Irish characters. His Irish songs made him popular with the people of New Orleans.

Miss Julia Dean performed three nights, commencing July 20th, performing *Julia*, in the "Hunchback;" *Gabrielle de Belle Isle*, in the "Duke's Wager;" and *Pauline*, in the "Lady of Lyons."

Miss Charlotte Cushman, the great card of the season, commenced January 23d, and performed fourteen nights to excellent business, during which she enacted the following characters: *Mrs. Haller*, in "The Stranger;" *Lady Macbeth*; *Romeo*, in "Romeo and Juliet;" *Meg Merrilies*; *Rosalind*, *Duchess*, in "The Honeymoon," and *Mrs. Simpson*, in the farce of "Simpson & Co.;" *Portia*; *Julia*, in the "Hunchback;" and *Lady Teazle*, in the "School for Scandal." Miss Cushman took her farewell benefit February 8th, performing on the occasion *Lady Teazle* and *Meg Merrilies*.

February 9th, Mdle. Celestine Frank's Ballet Troupe commenced an engagement, in which they performed fifteen nights. The troupe consisted of Mdle. C. Frank, Mdle. V. Frank, Miss E. Baron, Monsieur St. Leon Espinosa, and Monsieur Gredelean. This engagement was not as successful as it should have been, owing to the counter-attraction of Mdle. Jenny Lind, the great Swedish vocalist, who commenced an engagement on the night following their opening, drawing unusually crowded houses, on every alternate night. Mdle. Jenny Lind was on this occasion assisted by Signor Belletti, a great Italian singer, and Joseph Burke, a great Irish violinist. The prices for admission were on this occasion raised to the following rates: First and second circle, five dollars; parquet or orchestra, five dollars; pit, three dollars; gallery, two dollars. This engagement was a speculation undertaken by the celebrated American showman, P. T.

Barnum, who brought Miss Lind to the United States to perform a certain number of nights for a stipulated sum. Miss Lind proved to be the greatest attraction that had been introduced into America, and Mr. Barnum made a small fortune out of this one engagement of hers. A second contract was made with this lady, on different terms, in which she claimed a larger share of the proceeds; but rumor said that this engagement was not as profitable as the first one, owing to the fact that a large number of the lovers of music in this country had their curiosity as well as their tastes already satisfied.

The Ravel Family performed two nights, on the 28th and 29th of February, being the last of their performances for this season. April 15th, the Bateman Children commenced an engagement, performing, in all, nine nights, going through their usual round of characters. April 25th, first appearance in New Orleans of Mr. Charles Burke, the American comedian, on which occasion he performed *Solon Shingle*, in the American comedy of "The People's Lawyer;" concluding the evening by the farce of the "Spectre Bridegroom," in which he performed the character of *Dickory*. April 26th, he appeared as *Sudden*, in the comedy of "The Breach of Promise;" after which he appeared in a burlesque entitled "Lady of the Lions," in the character of *Clod Meddlenot*, in which he performed a comic medley dance and sang in two duets and a quartet. April 28th, he appeared in a new drama, entitled "Cavaliers and Roundheads," in the character of *John Duck*; the evening concluding by an original farce, written by Mr. Burke, entitled "Ole Bull," in which he performed the character of *Ebenezer Calf*, and sang an original song called "Independence Day," and performed a solo on the violin *a la* Ole Bull. April 29th, he appeared in Colman's comedy entitled "The Poor Gentleman," in the character of *Dr. Ollapod*; the evening concluding with the American pastoral comedy entitled "The Forest Rose, or American Farmers," in which he appeared in the character of *Jonathan Ploughboy*. April 30th, he appeared as *Billy Lackaday*, in the comedy of "Sweethearts and Wives;" the evening concluding with the Yankee farce entitled "Vermont Wool-dealer," in which he appeared as *Deuteronomy Dutiful*. May 1st, he repeated the character of *Solon Shingle*; he concluded the evening by playing *Slasher*, in the farce entitled "Slasher and Crasher." May 2d, was repeated "Breach of Promise" and "Forest Rose." May 3d, being his benefit night, Mrs. Burke, his wife, appeared for the night only, as *Alice*, in the drama of "Rip Van Winkle;" *Rip Van*

Winkle by Mr. Burke, being one of his great performances; after which was enacted "*Murrell, the Land Pirate*," in which he appeared as *Ichabod*, a Yankee; after which he repeated *Clod Meddlenot*, in "*Lady of the Lions*."

Monday, May 5th, the great magician, Macallister, began an engagement of twelve nights, in which he astonished the good people of New Orleans with tricks of legerdemain.

May 19th, Mr. John Collins, the Irish vocalist and comedian, commenced an engagement, in which he went through his usual round of Irish characters, terminating May 24th, which was also the last night of the season of the St. Charles Theatre.

The following were the "stars" of the New Orleans theatre in the season of 1850-51: Miss Cushman, Mdle. Jenny Lind, Ravel Family, Miss Julia Dean, Mrs. Farren, Mr. John Collins, Bateman Children, Charles Burke, Mdle. Frank's Ballet Troupe, Macallister, Mr. J. A. J. Neafie. The following were the members of the stock company: Mr. Leman, Mr. W. G. Jones, J. M. Weston, G. P. Farren, Watson, Mark Smith, H. Chapman, Fuller, Hickmott, Bishop, DeBar, Dean, Uhl, Edwin, Schoolcraft, Fredericks, Veitch, Boswell, Geddes, Venia, Everett, Cantor, Lamain, Mrs. Parker, Mrs. W. G. Jones, Mrs. Russell, Mrs. Shea, Mrs. H. Chapman, Miss King, Miss Hill, Mrs. Lamar, Miss Schoolcraft, Mrs. Moran, Miss Bennett, Miss S. Bennett, Mrs. Hill. Sometime about the middle of April, my partner, Mr. Sol. Smith, left for St. Louis, ostensibly for the purpose of making preparations for the opening of our season there. It appears from his own book, published a short time previous to his death, that he also undertook to act as agent for Mr. Barnum (a fact which was then unknown to me) in procuring a suitable building in which to give Miss Jenny Lind's concerts. Why he did not select our own theatre, he says, "was because a rumor had been set afloat that the theatre was insecure, and danger might be apprehended from the great number of persons assembled on that occasion." This also was a circumstance unknown to me, and of which I never heard until I read it in his book. That such a rumor was started in 1837, shortly after the first opening of the theatre, is true; but a committee of builders pronounced it then an unnecessary fear, and time had sustained their opinions for fourteen years, and through trials of audiences packed to the full capacity of the theatre. But a stranger matter to me is the fact that he applied to Mr. James Bates for his theatre, when, as he says in his book, he had always denounced it as insecure; and, as he

also says, time proved that he was correct ; for, not long after, the roof of this theatre *did* fall in, but fortunately when there was no audience in the house. His only reason for not taking the theatre was, that Mr. Bates asked him too much rent for it. He says Mr. Bates required five hundred dollars a night to be paid him as rent, and two hundred and fifty dollars per night as an equivalent to Miss Cushman, who had an engagement there at the time ; concluding with the remark that he thought it “ pretty good rent.” But there was another reason for not taking the theatre. Mr. Smith also says in his book that he then took Wyman’s Hall, and it was a grand success. Wyman’s Hall, which was located on Market Street, opposite the court-house, was a hall of very moderate capacity, and could not seat more than three hundred and fifty persons. Either of the theatres before referred to could seat more than double that number. It is a well-known fact, remembered by many living at the time of this present writing, that hundreds of persons were turned away that could not get admission ; and *this* he calls “ a great success.” Miss Jenny Lind had concluded her engagement before the St. Charles company reached St. Louis.

The summer season of 1851 in St. Louis commenced early in the month of May. A company, consisting of very nearly the same persons just set down as members of the St. Charles company, and many of the same “ stars,” appeared during this season. They were as follows, and about in the same order : Mdle. Frank, ballet troupe ; Bateman Children, C. Burke, Collins, Mrs. Farren, Miss Davenport, Macallister, and DeBar. Most of these were partially successful, but the season altogether was not profitable for the management, and terminated early in October. This was the last season of Ludlow & Smith in the city of St. Louis. Not long after, this property was sold by the owner to the United States government, for the purpose of erecting a building to be used as a custom-house and post-office, which is still used for those purposes. The old building was used for theatrical purposes late in the fall of this year by Mr. J. M. Field, with a company of actors belonging to the Varieties Theatre, New Orleans, then under the management of Mr. Thomas Placide. This company, more properly speaking, was a combination of portions of the companies of Mr. Field and Mr. Placide this season, and was undertaken to pass away the time until the opening of the Southern theatres, — the Varieties Theatre, New Orleans, under Mr. Placide, and the Mobile Theatre, under Mr. Field.

During the summer of 1851, a new theatre had been com-

menced in St. Louis, of which Mr. J. M. Field was the lessee. It was built by a stock company of gentlemen living in St. Louis. The shares were five hundred dollars each, and a very fine building was erected. Its location was on the south side of Market, midway between Fifth and Sixth streets. It would seat eleven or twelve hundred persons. It was erected on ground leased from Thomas S. Rutherford, for thirty years from the 1st of January, 1851; the ground was then to revert to the lessor, and the building to become his property. This theatre was called the Varieties, and was opened with a good stock company, under the management of Mr. J. M. Field, on May 10, 1852, with the following entertainment: The first piece presented was a prelude, said to be written by Mr. Shands, of St. Louis, and was entitled, "You Can't Open;" then followed the petit comedy of "Where There's a Will There's a Way," Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Field performing the principal characters, Mr. C. L. Stone and Miss M. A. Hill the secondaries; then followed dancing, by Madame Ciocca, Mdle. Baron, Mons. Espinosa, and others; concluding with the farce entitled "The Good-for-Nothing," in which Mr. W. H. Chippendale appeared; *Nan, the Good-for-Nothing*, was performed by Annie Lonsdale, this being her first appearance in this city.

This theatre was a very good building, handsomely decorated and furnished, but not so large and comfortable for a summer theatre as the St. Louis Theatre, recently given up by Ludlow & Smith.

Our New Orleans season of 1851-2 commenced on the 1st of November, with a prelude, being a localization of Colman's "Manager in Distress," by which much amusement was created by placing actors in different parts of the auditorium, so disguised as not to be known to the audience. Mr. Perry, representing a buck of the present day, was stationed in the parquet; Mr. Mark Smith, representing a Frenchman, in the dress-circle; Mr. Sloan, representing a rough steamboatman and Irishman, easily deceived them, as this was his first season in New Orleans, and he was therefore unknown to the audience. The other two gentlemen, notwithstanding they had played the previous season, were so made up as to deceive the most frequent visitors of the theatre. Mr. Sloan was arrested by the police, and thrust out of the theatre, and narrowly escaped being taken immediately to the calaboose. Following this came the comedy of "The Poor Gentleman;" which was followed by the farce of "The Rough Diamond," in which Mr. and Mrs. Sloan made their first appearance on

the stage in New Orleans, in the characters of *Margery* and *Cousin Joe*. This lady and gentleman soon established themselves as favorites with the New Orleans public, for they were good performers, educated for their profession in a proper English school.

Mr. George Barrett and his daughter Henrietta performed a short engagement, and although the lady was young and interesting, the engagement was not a success. Mr. C. A. Logan and his daughter Eliza also played a short engagement, and shared the fate of Barrett and daughter. Although Miss Eliza was, no doubt, a young lady of talent in her profession, yet nature had made it an impossibility for her to become a tragedienne. The obstacles in the way of her success were shortness of stature and inclination to become fat, and an unmistakable resemblance to her father in the face, on whose features Momus had placed such an indelible stamp that he could not on the stage express the most serious sentiments without creating a laugh. Poor Eliza! She deserved a better fate than to have been born of a father who gave up his intention of becoming a priest because the holy brothers used to laugh at what he said whenever he attempted to speak.

After an absence of several years, the incomparable Madame Celeste played an engagement, which, I regret to say, was not equal to her former successes, although she was an excellent actress and unequalled pantomimist. At this writing she is still living, and in London, where I pray that she may live in peace and comfort until she is tired of life, and then leave it without a regret.

Miss Julia Bennett (Mrs. Barrow), an English actress of fine abilities in the way of comedy, also played an engagement. This lady was a stranger to the New Orleans audience, who, with their usual generosity, gave her a hearty and substantial welcome. The Roussett Sisters played an engagement this season, being their first appearance in New Orleans. They were pretty French girls, and very fair dancers, but not after the style that suited the taste of the audiences of that day. The style of these young ladies was marked with elegance, grace, and modesty, and therefore was not generally admired by those who usually went to the theatre to see how high a lady could elevate her toes, and expose her person in a *pirouette*; consequently their engagement was not a success.

Mr. Neafie also played an engagement this season, but it was not a success. Mr. Neafie had been known there as a stock-actor for two or three seasons prior to this, and the audience did not seem to be willing to acknowledge him as a "star."

Mr. Neafie was an actor of fair abilities, — not great, but never falling below the medium line ; had a good voice, but did not know how to modulate it. He was respected on and off the stage, and his benefits were generally well attended. Miss Davenport (Mrs. Gen. Landers) played an engagement this season, which was, owing to a combination of unavoidable circumstances, a failure.

Prof. Anderson, the great magician, gave one performance, the receipts of which were one thousand dollars.

The Heron Family played an engagement again this season, introducing the tall English baronet comedian, Sir William Don. This six feet of English nobility had some comic humor, but he could not be called a finished comedian. I saw him in several characters, but the best of his performances, in my estimation, was *Cousin Joe*, in "The Rough Diamond," in which I was very much amused. Miss Matilda Heron played *Margery* to his *Cousin Joe*. We had "the short and the long of it," and it was very funny to see the embrace of the *short* and the *long*. Sir William's success as an artist in the United States was somewhat doubtful, and though we Yankees are very much prone to running after nobility, we could not be drawn out by this six-foot specimen. Sir William remained but a short time in the United States ; he returned to England, and visited us no more. He is now dead, but a lady calling herself Lady Don, said to be his widow, visited us some years after ; but although possessing, as it was said, fair abilities, was not more successful than her husband. She suddenly disappeared from our horizon, and went I know not whither.

During the engagement of Mr. Neafie, he brought out a piece for his benefit, written, as he said, by himself, entitled "Harold, or The Merchant of Calais ;" but the piece was not a success. It was repeated a few nights afterward, and proved a total failure.

On January 13th there was a heavy fall of snow in New Orleans, greater than had been known there in the memory of the "oldest inhabitant ;" in places where the wind had no power, it fell to the depth of six inches. As I was going from my lodging to the St. Louis Hotel, in the centre of the city, passing down St. Charles Street I beheld Dan Rice, the celebrated equestrian manager, in a sleigh, with a fine span of horses with bells, driving up St. Charles Street. I will venture to say it was a sight that no man living in that city had ever seen there before. The sleigh was composed of a large dry-goods box on a pair of temporary runners made of a two-inch plank.

This was not a splendid turnout, but it produced as great a sensation as would the lord mayor's carriage driven through the streets of New Orleans. On the 18th of the same month the thermometer marked as low as eighteen degrees above zero; this was several degrees lower than on the thirteenth. Ice was in the gutters of the streets,—an unparalleled circumstance in that latitude. My partner, Sol. Smith, returned from St. Louis on the 27th of February, after an absence of eleven weeks. This relieved me from the business of the St. Charles Theatre, and left me free to return home, which I did, taking leave of New Orleans on the 28th of February, and arriving in Mobile on the following day.

Kossuth, the Hungarian chief, visited New Orleans in March, 1852. He created a great excitement among the people of that city by his speeches, and obtained some friends, who sympathized with him and helped him financially towards his progress through the United States. I returned to New Orleans April 13th, on my route to St. Louis. My partner remained in New Orleans until the close of the season. Our regular season in New Orleans terminated March 23d; but an after-season was made, which was filled up by the performances of the Ravels' company, and terminated on the 9th of May, 1852. The Ravel Family performed forty-six consecutive nights, the receipts averaging about five thousand dollars per week,—seven performances to the week.

This proved to be a very profitable season for the management, although it had an unpropitious beginning. June 5, 1852, my partner, Sol. Smith, started for the East to make engagements for the ensuing New Orleans season.

June 25th, I visited the new Varieties Theatre, and witnessed the performance of Sheridan's sterling comedy of the "School for Scandal," which, for the excellence of cast of characters, has seldom, if ever, been equalled in the United States: *Sir Peter Teazle*, Mr. W. H. Chippendale; *Sir Oliver Surface*, Mr. Bass; *Charles Surface*, Mr. Charles Howard; *Joseph Surface*, James S. Wright; *Moses*, Mr. George Holland; *Sir Benjamin Backbite*, Mr. J. M. Field; *Crabtree*, Mark Smith; *Rowley*, Mr. Welch; *Snake*, Mr. Veitch; *Trip*, E. Duncan; *Careless*, Mr. Leman; *Sir Toby* (with a song), Mr. Duffield (afterwards manager of the Mobile Theatre); *Lady Teazle*, Mrs. C. Howard; *Lady Sneerwell*, Mrs. Clarke; *Mrs. Candor*, Mrs. J. M. Field; *Maria*, Miss Hill.

June 29th, at the hour of 11:30 A. M., the Hon. Henry Clay, United States senator, departed this life at Washington City. Mr. George Collier, the great St. Louis merchant, and owner

of the St. Louis Theatre, died at his residence, on Fourth Street, July 18, 1852. September 28th, I arrived in New Orleans, for the purpose of making arrangements for the ensuing season in that city, and on that day concluded a new lease with the Gas Bank on the St. Charles Theatre for one year, with the privilege of renewing it for four years, at the rate of \$7,000 per annum. This reservation with regard to the length of the lease was predicated upon the fact that my partner and I had resolved to retire from the business of the theatre as soon as we could obtain a purchaser for our interest in it. Having made the necessary preparations for the coming season in New Orleans, I visited my family in Mobile. I remained at home until the 24th of October, when I returned to New Orleans to commence the ensuing theatrical season. On October 29th, I received a letter from Junius Brutus Booth, the great tragedian, proposing terms for an engagement in our theatre in New Orleans. November 6th, the season of the St. Charles Theatre of 1852 commenced with the performance of "She Stoops to Conquer," and the farce of "Sketches in India." In the first-named piece Mrs. C. B. Fisher acted *Miss Hardcastle*, N. M. Ludlow the part of *Young Marlowe*. The house was to have opened with Knowles's play of the "Hunchback," but Mrs. Estelle Potter, who was to have made her first appearance as *Julia*, not having arrived in time, the foregoing play was substituted. Mr. J. B. Booth commenced an engagement on the 14th of November, of six nights. The house was very full, and he played very well. He performed, during the five nights, *Richard III.*, *Sir Giles Overreach*, *Pescara* twice, and *Shylock*. On his benefit night he performed the part of *Sir Edward Mortimer*, in the play of "The Iron Chest;" *Wilford*, N. M. Ludlow; and concluded the evening by playing the farce of "The Review, or the Wag of Windsor," in which he enacted the comic character of *John Lump*, the Yorkshire boy, the character of *Caleb Quotam* being performed by N. M. Ludlow, at Mr. Booth's particular request. This was the last appearance of Mr. Booth on the stage of this life, for he sickened and died on his passage up the Mississippi River, on his way home to Baltimore, on the 1st of December, 1852, at fifteen minutes past twelve o'clock (midnight). The members of the St. Charles company were called to a meeting in the green-room of the theatre on the 3d of December, when a speech was made by N. M. Ludlow, in which the character and professional abilities of the great tragedian were referred to in terms of high commendation. At the meeting, resolutions were passed honoring the memory of

deceased, and recommending the members of the profession to wear crape on the left arm, as a badge of mourning, for thirty days; which was carried into effect, at least as far as regarded the company of the St. Charles Theatre. As this is probably the last occasion I shall have to make mention of this great tragedian's career, I shall here add a biographical sketch in relation to him; in doing which I shall have recourse to Mr. Ireland's excellent work on the "New York Stage" for the greater part of his biography, at least so far as it relates to his career prior to his arrival in America. The latter portion of Mr. Booth's life, and especially that portion connected with his Southern and Western career, I shall give from my own personal knowledge of it: Mr. Booth was born at St. Pancras, near London, on the 1st of May, 1796. His father was a reputable solicitor, and his mother a descendant or relative of the celebrated John Wilkes. In early life Mr. Booth gave his attention to pictorial pursuits, in which he evinced much skill and taste. He afterwards entered the navy, which he abandoned to acquire the painter's art; which, in turn, was thrown aside for the study of law; that being succeeded by renewed attempts with his pencil, accompanied by some creditable experiments in sculpture. He was finally seized with a passion for the stage, and began his theatrical career at Deptford, as *Camillo*, in "The Honeymoon," on the 13th of December, 1813. He afterwards played in several continental theatres, and returning to England, made his *début* at Covent Garden in October, 1815, as *Sylvanus*, in "As You Like It," remaining through the season at a salary of two pounds a week. He afterwards acted at Worthing and Brighton, and at the latter place made a great hit as *Sir Giles Overreach*, which resulted in his being immediately engaged for Covent Garden, where he reappeared February 12, 1817, as *Richard III.*; and notwithstanding the sneers, sarcasms, and discouragements uttered by almost every member of the company, he gained for his representation the most triumphant success. After playing it a second time, with even increased applause, the Drury Lane Theatre management induced him to leave Covent Garden, and on the 20th announced his appearance at their house in the character of *Iago*, to Mr. Kean's *Othello*; their performance being received with acclamations, and creating an intense excitement in dramatic circles. A repetition of the play was advertised for the following evening, and attracted a crowded and brilliant audience. But Mr. Booth had already repented of his flight from Covent Garden, finding out, when too late, that the Drury Lane committee dreaded his attraction at a rival house,

and after using him for a time, would necessarily shelve him, as the characters in which he was likely to succeed were already in Mr. Kean's possession ; and he consequently refused to appear, assigning also, as an additional reason, an attack of indisposition.

An overflowing house awaited Mr. Booth's return to Covent Garden, where, on the 28th, he again attempted to perform *Richard* ; but his vacillating course had excited a strong feeling of disapprobation, which was artfully fanned by the Drury Lane management, and, notwithstanding the presence of a numerous body of friends, he was assailed throughout the entire evening with riotous demonstrations of opposition, and the play was gone through with in dumb show only. Mr. Booth made an apologetic appeal to the public the next day, but another riotous assemblage greeted him on the 1st of March, while on the 3d he played *Richard* with very slight manifestations of disapprobation, which thereafter entirely ceased. He next appeared as *Sir Giles Overreach*, which was as attractive as his *Richard* ; followed by *Posthumous, Fitzharding* ("Curfew"), *Sir Edward Mortimer*, and *Rinaldo*, in the "Conquest of Taranto ;" being supported by Charles Kemble, Macready, Young, and Miss L. Booth, a lady who, on his first appearance, had earnestly requested him to add an *e* to his name, for fear they might be mistaken for relatives. He afterwards played at Edinburgh and the principal provincial cities with great *éclat*, returning at the commencement of the season to Covent Garden, where soon after the tragedy of "The Apostate" was produced. Although Mr. Booth rehearsed the character of *Pescara*, which he afterwards played with fine effect, he refused to perform it, and Mr. Macready was substituted, making in its performance his first advance from his hitherto merely tolerable mediocrity. In April, 1820, Mr. Booth played *King Lear* with masterly effect, and created such an interest in his performance that Mr. Glossop, of the Coburg Theatre, engaged him to appear there for three nights a week (his off-nights at Covent Garden), in the character of *Fitzarden*, in the melodrama, "The Lear of Private Life," where for a long time he attracted overflowing audiences. In the fall of 1820 Mr. Booth was again engaged at Drury Lane, where he shared the leading business with Wallack and John Cooper. He then played at the English theatre at New Amsterdam, and visited the island of Madeira ; whence he suddenly took passage for America, and arrived at Norfolk, Virginia, in July, 1821. He made his first appearance in this country at Richmond, Virginia, on July 13th, as *Richard III.*

Thus far am I indebted to Mr. Ireland's account of this tragedian. After performing a few nights in Richmond, he came to Petersburg, where I was at that time in the company of J. H. Caldwell, and performed one night in the character of *Richard III*. He then returned to Richmond, finished his engagement there, and immediately returned to Petersburg and played a successful engagement of several nights. He also played for the same company at Norfolk, Virginia; likewise at New Orleans, in 1822.

The subsequent career of Mr. Booth in the South and West, the attentive reader of this work will already have been made acquainted with.

Junius Brutus Booth, when in full possession of those great mental and physical powers with which nature had endowed him, was the most finished and complete representative of tragedy, taking him in his entire range of characters, that ever came within my observation. Mr. Booth's best representations, in my opinion, were *Sir Giles Overreach*, *Sir Edward Mortimer*, *Iago*, *Pescara*, and *Richard III*. Mr. Booth, I believe, considered *Richard III*. as his most effective character; at least it would appear so, from his selecting it for his opening in nearly all of his engagements. Why he should have selected this character on such occasions was always an enigma to me, for it was one in which he was far from making an effective impression. The first two acts, in stage parlance, he simply "walked through;" in fact, he was great only in the last two acts, and in these he was far ahead of all competitors. Mr. Cooke's *Richard* was more evenly good, and his acting in the first three acts had more severity of manner and courtly polish than had that of Mr. Booth. There was a brusqueness of manner in Mr. Booth that bordered on coarseness. Historical sketches have come down to us from different persons in regard to that same *Richard*, placing him before us as a man by no means as deformed as he is represented generally on the stage, and which describe him as of pleasing and ingratiating manners. Lady Desmonde, an old dowager, and a lady of the court in *Richard's* time, has left on record that she danced with him while he was yet Duke of Gloster; that he was the most courtly gentleman and the handsomest man in the room, except his brother, the reigning Edward IV. However, in regard to the old dowager, perhaps woman's vanity formed one of the ingredients in the coloring of the portrait, as old ladies are generally desirous of having it supposed that they danced with the handsomest and most distinguished men of their day. But be this as it may with

reference to the accounts, historical or biographical, the actor who undertakes to portray *Richard III.* is bound to follow the author, and Shakespeare has undoubtedly drawn him as a deformed man; but there is nothing given by him to indicate that he meant he should be uncourtly or uncouth. "He could smile and smile, and be a villain still," as he says to his wife Anne, "You are the only one I never yet deceived, and 'tis my honesty that tells you now I hate you." Where an actor can bring a knowledge of historical facts to heighten his picture, provided it does not conflict with the drawing of the author, he would be justifiable in doing so. My opinion of Shakespeare's drawing of *Richard* is, that of an artful, designing, gracious, smiling villain, who believes that language was invented to deceive.

When the boat on which Mr. Booth died arrived at Louisville, Mrs. Booth was telegraphed at Baltimore, to come on to Cincinnati to receive his remains. This she did, and conveyed all that was left of a kind husband and a loving father to the cemetery where he was buried, at Baltimore, Maryland.

January 8th, 1853, Thomas S. Hamblin died, aged fifty-five, at his residence on Broome Street, New York, of brain fever. Very little was known of the histrionic abilities of this gentleman in the valley of the Mississippi, he having made but one professional trip to the West and South, and that was in the fall and winter of 1829-30. He was born in England, and was intended to follow the occupation of a merchant; but he preferred the writings of Shakespeare to the writings generally contained in the ledger, so he jumped over the counter, and dropped on the stage of a theatre. After many years of peregrinations in the provincial theatres, he at length found himself on the boards of one of the London theatres, where he made his first appearance in the character of *Hamlet*. His success was sufficient to secure him an engagement through the season, and a wife in the person of Miss Blanchard, daughter of Mr. Blanchard, a well-known comedian in the London theatres. In 1825, Mr. and Mrs. Hamblin came to America, where he opened at the Park Theatre, New York, in the character of *Hamlet*, in November of that year. In 1830 he became co-lessee, with James H. Hackett, of the Bowery Theatre, New York. In 1834 his wife obtained a divorce from him, but they had separated a few years before, she alleging infidelity against him. Mr. Hamblin accumulated a considerable fortune by his management of the Bowery Theatre at different periods, but lost a great portion of it in undertaking the management of the Park Theatre in 1848. In 1836 he revisited England, and played at Covent Garden Theatre, but

with very little success. Mr. Hamblin's histrionic abilities were by no means great; although his readings were generally correct, his articulation was bad. He was for many years the victim of asthma, and his voice became husky, and at times rendered his utterance unpleasant and almost inaudible. After the death of his first wife he married Mrs. Shaw, an English actress, for many years a member of his company. To this lady, it is said, Mr. Hamblin on his death left a hundred thousand dollars. She survived him twenty years, dying July 4, 1873.

Mrs. Mowatt commenced a "star" engagement in March. About the time she began, an article appeared in the *Daily Delta* (which had been hostile to the management during the whole season), charging them with meanness in procuring stage equipments, and asserting that Mrs. Mowatt had paid for some things she deemed necessary for the success of her pieces, out of her own purse. Mrs. Mowatt came out in an article in a newspaper, saying that they had made a false statement. The writer of the abusive article referred to was a man named Northall, who assumed to himself the title of "Doctor." He was a hanger-on at the office of the *Daily Delta*, for the sake of obtaining free admission to the Varieties Theatre. This man was supposed by the management of that establishment to be the theatrical critic of that paper, and therefore was placed on the free-list. In return, Northall conceived it necessary to puff up the Varieties and to write down the St. Charles.

March 24, 1853, Mr. James P. Bailly died, at St. Louis, of apoplexy. He was the treasurer of Ludlow & Smith for a number of years. He was of good family connections, honest and courteous, and died regretted by all who knew him.

The regular winter season of the St. Charles Theatre closed March 28, 1853, but an after-season immediately commenced, in which we retained only a company to play farces between the pieces of the Ravels. This celebrated company of pantomimists remained with us, playing continuous nights, until May 1st,—the most successful engagement ever played in New Orleans, by them or any other company. With the ending of this season the copartnership of Ludlow & Smith terminated, which had existed for eighteen years; and at the same time terminated the career of N. M. Ludlow as actor and manager, after a career of thirty-eight years, thirty-five of which he was managing theatres.

On the night of the last performance of this season I enacted the part of *Scamper*, in the farce of "The Promissory

Note ;" at the end of which, being called for, I went forward and addressed the audience. What I said on that occasion is here inserted, as copied from the evening edition of the New Orleans *Picayune* of the following Monday, May 2d :—

“ THEATRICALS.

“*Ludlow and Smith's Farewell.*—The St. Charles Theatre closed on Saturday night for the season, Messrs. Ludlow and Smith taking their farewell of the stage on the same occasion. The house was filled to overflowing. The inimitable Ravel Family gave their powerful services in several pieces, and Mr. Ludlow played *Scamper*, in The ‘Promissory Note,’ as only he could do it. At the conclusion of the comedy he was loudly called for, and appeared before the curtain and delivered the following address :—

“*Ladies and Gentlemen:* As this is the last time, most likely, that I shall ever have the honor of appearing before you, in my double capacity of actor and manager, it being the last night of our season and of our management, I avail myself of the occasion to present to you, and the people generally of New Orleans, on behalf of my absent partner and myself, our most grateful acknowledgments for the aid and support afforded us during our career amongst ye. It is now nearly thirty-six years since, individually, I brought the first dramatic company using the English language that ever performed a regular season in this city. And about thirteen years since my present partner and myself commenced as theatrical managers in the city of New Orleans. During those long periods of time,—speaking for myself individually, and my partner and myself jointly,—I can with all sincerity say, that kindness and liberality have universally been our meed from the good people of the Crescent City. This we have always been fully sensible of, have universally acknowledged, and endeavored, as far as lay within our power, to make a proper return for,—the assertions of designing and malicious persons to the contrary notwithstanding. I will not obtrude myself upon your time and pleasure to-night, ladies and gentlemen, by attempting anything like a lengthy speech; but I could not allow the curtain to fall that is to shut me out, professionally, perhaps forever from your smiles, without taking a respectful leave of you. I felt such to be my duty, independent of any feeling on the occasion.

“Before going, permit me to solicit of you—though perhaps the request is superfluous—a continuance of your kindness to our friend and successor, Mr. DeBar. We have known him for many years; have always found him industrious, kind, frank, just, and upright in all his intercourse and dealings; and if our testimony in his behalf be of any value, we say you could not bestow your favors on a better man. To him, after this night, we resign the reins of management, leaving to him, what we sincerely believe he can realize, years of successful prosperity. To the members of our present dramatic company, and those of the past winter season, to the gentlemen of the orchestra, artists, mechanics, clerks, officers, and others attached to the establishment, we return our thanks for their hearty and efficient coöperation in the labors of the past season.

“And now, ladies and gentlemen, we take our final leave, wishing you all health and prosperity; and to the people of this goodly city that prosperity and wealth that seems now, more than ever, preparing for them. Energy and perseverance are all that is required. Your rail cars and your ‘Father of Waters’ must bring the treasures of the great valley of the Mississippi to your levee; the enterprise and intelligence of your citizens build up this favored spot, until it becomes the cynosure of all eyes, the great culminating point in this vast valley, for commerce, taste, and the fine arts.

“And now, ladies and gentlemen, with a sad heart, I bid you all a long but kind farewell.

“During the delivery of these remarks Mr. L. was frequently interrupted by loud and continued applause, which at the mention of Mr. DeBar’s name became perfectly deafening. At the conclusion, DeBar was also called for. Mr. Ludlow was compelled to come forward and state that Mr. DeBar was not in the theatre. The scene must have been intensely gratifying to Mr. L., and the faltering manner in which he delivered the concluding portion of the address, showed that he was deeply affected. We know that we but echo the opinions of our citizens when we wish Messrs. Ludlow and Smith all the happiness in their retirement this world is capable of offering.”

A D D E N D A.

Account of Mrs. Edwin Forrest—Lola Montes—First Season of Varieties in St. Louis—Bates's Theatre—People's Theatre—Dr. Atkinson—Julia Bennett—George Wood, Manager, marries Miss E. Logan—Account of Varieties Theatre, New Orleans—Account of Chicago Theatres—John B. Rice—J. H. McVicker—Biography of J. H. McVicker.

I TAKE occasion here to mention that during the month of March Mrs. Catherine Sinclair, formerly Mrs. Edwin Forrest, performed an engagement at the Varieties Theatre, New Orleans. This being immediately after the celebrated divorce in which she obtained a release from her marital vows, there was a great curiosity afloat to behold her, and her engagement proved to be a success financially.

April 8, 1853, I performed for the first and only time in the Varieties Theatre, New Orleans, for the benefit of the New York Dramatic Fund. The entertainment of the evening commenced with the comedy of "Laugh When You Can," in which I enacted the part of *Gossamer*; after which there was singing, and then dancing by the *corps de ballet*. Dancing also by the celebrated Lola Montes, the Irish-Spanish-Bavarian mistress of the king of Bavaria, who on this occasion took great offence at something said or done by the prompter of the theatre, and in true masculine style slapped his face. This affair caused much notoriety by the prompter prosecuting her for assault and battery. How it terminated I am unable to say. This poor creature, after a long, varied, and disorderly life, died many years after in the city of New York, in extreme poverty.

The Varieties Theatre, St. Louis, under the management of Mr. J. M. Field, terminated its first season June 13, 1852, having proved a very losing season to the management. Mr. Field's error was a combination of a very expensive company of ill-assorted material, that proved impracticable and vexatious in its working. In December, 1853, the roof, or that part over the parquet, of Mr. Bates's theatre on Pine Street, between Third and Fourth, fell in with a terrible crash; but luckily it was after the audience had retired. The cause of this accident was supposed to be the weight of a heavy fall of snow and the insufficiency of the construction of the building.

The People's Theatre was opened in the fall of 1852, for dramatic purposes. It was situated with an entrance on the south side of Olive Street, between Third and Fourth. The ground had been previously occupied for equestrian purposes, under the management of a man by the name of Stokes. The People's Theatre was opened under the management of a Dr. Atkinson; but that gentleman understood more about pills than he did about plays. He was a gentleman and a scholar, and I have no doubt he was a good physician; but the people did not like his plays any better than they did his physic, and so they said, "Throw physic to the dogs! I'll none on't." And so the Doctor retired from the management in dignified disgust. Shortly after, Miss Julia Bennett, *alias* Mrs. Barrow, tried her powers as a manageress; and although she produced some very good pieces, which were well played,—herself being the leading, interesting feature,—her speculation proved a failure. The next candidate in this theatre for managerial honors was Mr. George Wood, who had previously kept a hotel on Vine Street. He opened the theatre March 6, 1854. Mr. Wood, though practically unacquainted with management, possessed good judgment and considerable tact, and for several years managed his theatre profitably to himself and satisfactorily to the public. Shortly after embarking in management, he married Miss Eliza Logan, who until her death, several years afterwards, proved to him a most amiable and valuable wife; furnishing him with a practical knowledge of theatrical matters in which he otherwise would have been deficient. Mr. Wood occupied this theatre but a few years; afterwards it became a large bowling-saloon, which was opened by Mr. Lupe, and may be occupied by him at the time of this writing.

The first Varieties Theatre in New Orleans, previously referred to in this book, was destroyed by fire, November 21, 1854; and a new theatre was built on the same site, and opened in the fall of 1855, under the management of Mr. Dion Boucicault, and called the Gaieties. He retained it for one year, and then Mr. W. H. Crisp took it, and managed there for two years. This building was destroyed by fire December 1, 1870. The present New Orleans Varieties was opened in the fall of 1872.

CHICAGO THEATRES.

The first building specially intended for a theatre was erected on Randolph Street, near Dearborn, by John B. Rice, in 1847, and opened June 28th of the same year, continuing in

successful operation until July 30, 1850, when it was destroyed by fire. The loss to Mr. Rice was stated to be \$4,000, and insurance \$2,000. In August, Mr. Rice purchased 80x100 feet on Dearborn Street, and on the 16th of September commenced the erection of the first brick theatre in Chicago, which was opened on February 3, 1851. Previous to the advent of Mr. Rice, the amusements of Chicago were given in halls temporarily fitted up for the purpose; the principal one was known as the "City Saloon," at which Joseph Jefferson, when a boy, appeared as a comic singer, it is said. From the destruction of Mr. Rice's first theatre to the opening of his second, a hall was fitted up in the Tremont House, where concerts and dramatic entertainments were given; and here the Bateman Children made their first appearance in Chicago, on November 18, 1850. Powers's "Greek Slave" had been exhibited in the same hall on the 12th of the same month. September 26, 1854, the "Metropolitan Hall" was opened to the public, and the "Tremont Hall" virtually ceased to exist as a place of amusement. On November 21, 1855, Levi J. North opened "North's Amphitheatre," a large frame building on Monroe Street. On the 15th of April a new German hall was opened, and the first dramatic performance in the German language given in Chicago. C. R. Thorne, Sr., changed "North's Amphitheatre" into the "National Theatre," on August 4, 1856, but on the day of the first performance a difficulty arose between Thorne and North; the latter took possession of the premises, and Thorne was left out. By the 14th of the same month he had a market-house fitted up as the "National Theatre," and opened it with the "Hunchback," he being the *Master Walter*, his wife playing *Helen*, and his daughter *Julia*. On the 7th of October, Thorne had "Metropolitan Hall" fitted up, and opened it with Collins, the Irish comedian.

November 17, 1856, Yankee Robinson fitted up and opened a place called Robinson's Athenæum; "Fazio," being the play, with Charlotte Crampton as *Bianca*. On the 20th of the same month, North reopened his house for dramatic performances, having a movable stage, with a circle for equestrian performances under it. Thorne and Robinson's ventures were short-lived. From 1847 until 1857, J. B. Rice was the recognized manager in the city, and all the best attractions, both musical and dramatic, were given at his theatre. Mr. Rice, after several years of professional life, withdrew from management. He was twice elected mayor of Chicago, and

finally was sent as a representative from Chicago to the National Congress at Washington, where he died.

James H. McVicker commenced the erection of a new theatre in Chicago, on Madison Street, on a lot 82x190 feet. This was in every respect a complete and substantial theatre, the building costing \$83,000. It was opened November 5, 1857, with "The Honeymoon" and "Rough Diamond," and from that day to this has been considered as the leading theatre of the great West. As an evidence that the location was a good one, Madison Street is now the most important thoroughfare of Chicago. The same ground is now occupied by McVicker's Theatre, the present being the third theatre built by Mr. McVicker in fourteen years, the three representing an outlay of nearly \$400,000.

The first place devoted to variety performances was at 115 and 117 Dearborn street, the managers being Van Vleet & Chadwick; it was opened June 1, 1863. In July of the same year, John M. Weston opened a place styled the Chicago Museum, which afterwards became Wood's, and then Aiken's Museum, and lasted until the great fire.

April 17, 1865, Crosby's Opera-house was opened to the public, with Italian opera, being the first opera season given in Chicago up to that date. Matinées were inaugurated in Chicago by McVicker in July, 1863; they are now given regularly in all the legitimate theatres on Wednesdays and Saturdays. There are nine theatres in Chicago, of which number McVicker's is the only one thoroughly organized, in all departments, for the proper production of plays.

BIOGRAPHY OF J. H. M'VICKER.

As this gentleman has been very prominent as a manager of theatres in the West, I desire to give some account of his career.

J. H. McVicker, at present the oldest active manager in the West, if not in the country, was born in the city of New York, February 14, 1822. He emigrated to St. Louis in 1837, and worked at printing in the *St. Louis Republican*, doing the rolling for job work with Mr. George Knapp, the senior proprietor of the *Republican*. He visited Ludlow & Smith's theatre as often as he could find the means, and became stage-struck. He entered the profession as call-boy under their management, at the opening of the St. Charles Theatre, in 1843. He remained in the employment of Ludlow & Smith, in New Orleans, for three years; he then went to the American, in New

Orleans, and in May, 1848, joined J. B. Rice's company in Chicago, as first low comedian. Since that time he has, with a short interregnum, been identified with Chicago theatricals, both as actor and manager. In 1850 he bought the Yankee plays of Dan Marble from his widow, and in 1851 left Rice's theatre and went on a "starring" tour with Yankee pieces. In 1854 he assumed the stage-management of the People's Theatre, on Olive Street, St. Louis, — George Wood being manager. In 1855 he went to England, appearing in four theatres in London in a round of Yankee characters, playing "Sam Patch in France" for twelve weeks. He returned to New York in September, 1856, and played an engagement in Burton's Theatre, in Chambers Street. He was induced by Mr. Wood to return to St. Louis and take charge of his theatre once more. He remained in St. Louis until 1857, when he returned to Chicago for the purpose of building a theatre, which he opened November 5, 1857. He has since remained in Chicago, and up to the time of the great fire had accumulated a fortune sufficient to warrant his retiring from professional duties. During the summer of 1871 he had torn down "McVicker's" Theatre, excepting the outer walls, and reconstructed it, at an expense of \$90,000. It had been opened but nine weeks when it was destroyed, with all his other property, except two small houses. Early in the spring of 1872 he commenced the erection of his present theatre, — the best in the West, — and opened it on the 15th of August, 1872; the building costing over \$200,000. Since 1848, Chicago has had many reverses and many theatrical managers, but McVicker is the only one who has kept pace with the growth of the city.

Mr. McVicker, strictly speaking, has been a working man from his earliest entrance into the business of life, and the usual reward of industry has been meted out to him. During the many years of his management he has been noted for his energy, enterprise, and urbanity, as well as for his honorable and just dealings; yet he has not been miserly with his earnings, but has freely used them, when by so doing he could serve a friend.



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